



Pages 20-21 Fall cycling in Yanqing

Autumn is the perfect time for cycling. Here's everything you need to know to get started.



Pages 12-13 Architecture's Picasso

See what Frank Gehry thinks about new trends in the capital's architecture.

Generation *divorce*



A Chinese proverb says that a marriage can hardly survive seven years. For young couples born in the 1980s, these words of wisdom require some rounding down.

Distracted by new attractions like their careers, money and benefits, young adults seem to lack the patience necessary for married life.

Many wed within days of their first kiss and divorce after the first dispute.

But when taken in the context of 30 years of economic growth, this surge in divorce may be more an expression of prosperity than the faults of a lone generation.

Experts hold out hope that this trend will taper off as the '80s generation comes to find its place in society.

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Big ticket purchases move to Web

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Gov steps in to regulate pinyin names

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Mandarin contest tests foreigners

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Automated caravan soon in Shanghai

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Low-altitude airspace opens to private aircraft

By Li Zhixin

Restrictions on low-altitude flights are expected to ease as the Military Commission of the Central Committee has approved a reform of low-altitude airspace management drafted by the National Airspace Administration Committee.

Details of the draft are expected to be announced at the Zhuhai Airshow next month.

Meng Xiangkai, president of the General Aircraft Corporation under the Aviation Industry Corporation of China, confirmed the news on October 1. The reforms will be implemented during the next five to 10 years, he said, citing a report he was given.

By 2011, Changchun and Guangzhou will open low-altitude airspace to pilot operation. Beijing, Lanzhou, Jinan, Nanjing and Chengdu are expected to follow during the next four years.

"The airspace will open heights of less than 1,000 meters to helicopters and below 4,000 meters to corporate jets. Flights higher than 4,000 meters will remain limited," Meng said.

"In the pilot cities, individuals with a flying license and cer-



China has as many as 1,600 licensed personal pilots.

CFP Photo

tificate of airworthiness can fly a helicopter without submitting a report and getting approval from Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) and Chinese Air Force (CAF)," he said.

However, it is still necessary to get approval from CAAC and CAF for flights between the altitudes of 1,000 and 4,000 meters.

Yao Ye, the exhibition manager of Civil Aviation Management Magazine, said the potential for private-capital aircraft purchases in China is huge. "In the next 15 years, the domestic demand for general aircraft will probably exceed 15,000," she said.

The CAAC reported that China has as many as 1,600 licensed

personal pilots.

"The further easing of low-altitude airspace restrictions will improve the development of the general aviation industry. It will open new markets for business flights, in-air sightseeing, aerial photography, forestry seedling cultivation, disaster tracking and rescue," she said.

City to recruit public in new language center

By Zhao Hongyi

The municipal government is preparing to recruit professional translators and expats to staff its new translation center, currently slated to open next year.

The center was the buzz at last weekend's Beijing Speaks Foreign Languages (BSFL) party at the Confucius Temple near Yonghegong.

The center will be part of the municipal bureau of foreign affairs, a local branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It will provide linguistic services to the municipal government, host BSFL events, ensure city signposts contain intelligible English and provide translation assistance at international events and emergency language services.

"We need many professional translators and interpreters," said Zhao Huimin, director of the municipal foreign affairs office.

Currently the government uses interpreters pulled from local universities and colleges when needed, but Zhao said it is unsatisfied with the quality of their work.

The center's first round of recruitment will hire English, Japanese, French, Dutch and Russian interpreters and translators. He said it may continue to recruit expats to provide training and supervision in the future.

Zhao said the center will add more languages in the future.

Shanghai, Jiangsu and Shandong have similar centers to provide linguistic services to municipal governments and residents.

In April, the bureau of foreign affairs began offering 24-hour multi-language emergency access to police, fire and medical hotlines. Current language offerings include English, French, Spanish, Dutch, German, Russian, Arabic, Japanese and Korean.

BSFL events are organized by the municipal Foreign Affairs Bureau. 2010 marks the 12th consecutive year of the event.

The annual event is organized in the hope of elevating the foreign language capabilities of the capital's residents.

Garbage plant tourism to teach recycling

By Li Zhixin

Starting this month, those curious about the journey of their trash can visit seven of the city's landfills on Thursdays, when their garbage disposal plants will be open to visitors.

Open plants include Xiaowuji Solid Waste Forwarding Station in Chaoyang District, Beishenshu Refuse Landfill in Tongzhou District, Majialou Refuse Transfer Station and Datun Refuse Transfer Station in Fengtai District, Anding Refuse Landfill and Nan-

gong Refuse Composting Plant in Daxing District and Asuwei Refuse Sanitary Landfill in Changping District.

The city's 16 other waste disposal plants will also begin accepting visitors soon, said Wang Qinyou, news director of the Beijing Municipal Appearance Management Committee.

According to data supplied by the committee, Beijingers produced 18.3 thousand tons of household garbage every day and 6.66 million tons during the year.

"Most house garbage is moist food waste, which we cannot burn to generate power," Wang said.

"More than 50 percent of their waste ends up in landfills. That's why the government has been supporting the development of composting and recycling programs to deal with food waste," she said.

The goal of landfill visits is to strengthen awareness of the need to reduce and reuse resources to avoid creating so much trash.

The problem creating new landfills is a perennial headache

for the government, which frequently butts heads with the communities neighboring any new site, Wang said.

Wang said the Beijing Environment Sanitation Engineering Group will supply each plant with technical illustrations they can use to teach visitors about the complex processing steps, environmental monitoring and pollution control techniques.

Those interested in scheduling a landfill visit can call 67386688-8309, 8750 2165 or 5968 2029.

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Man or woman?

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Living mode

Yuanmingyuan calls for return of looted relics

By Han Manman

Yuanmingyuan officials released a petition on Monday that appeals for a return of relics looted from the site, also known as the Old Summer Palace, 150 years ago.

The petition is part of a series of commemorative activities, including academic conferences, exhibitions and culture exchanges, marking the 150th anniversary of the destruction of the imperial garden.

In it, Yuanmingyuan administrators appeal to the people and institutions holding these lost relics to return them. It also calls on all who cherish peace and honesty to oppose the auction of cultural relics.

The appeal also targets academic institutions that are trying to research and protect Yuanmingyuan relics.

The petition will be displayed in the park to collect signatures throughout the next year.

Chen Mingjie, director of the Yuanmingyuan Administration, said the petition would be published in English and French to attract more international support. The management has hired famous spokesmen to champion the campaign, he said.

Located in the city's northwest, Yuanmingyuan, which began construction in 1709, was a pleasure garden for imperial families during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

In 1860, British and French troops pillaged and burned Yuanmingyuan in a siege that spanned two days from October 18 to 19.

It was raided again in 1900 by occupation forces deployed by the UK, US, Germany, France, Russia, Japan, Italy and the Austria-Hun-



Experts say recovering the looted relics is tougher than most believe.

CFP Photo

gary Empire.

"At least 1.5 million relics from Yuanmingyuan were looted or otherwise lost over the years," Chen said.

Detailed lists of relics in the garden were burned in the fires, so an exact list of the number of relics lost remains unknown. In the years since, many of the relics have resurfaced both in China and abroad.

According to UNESCO, 1.64 million Chinese relics are being stored by some 200 museums in 47 countries.

In 2006, the Yuanmingyuan administration called on the public

to donate lost treasures. The appeal brought back 85 pieces donated by universities, public institutions and Beijing residents.

To date, Yuanmingyuan has recovered 150 missing relics, the *Beijing News* reported.

Recovery efforts have been waylaid by various obstacles.

Last year, the administration sent a group of researchers overseas to scout for lost treasures. The plan imploded in the US when overseas museums reportedly refused to cooperate.

Other lost treasures are a peren-

nial feature of auctions overseas. Last year, the heads of a rabbit and a rat, once part of an elaborate zodiac fountain, were auctioned in Paris for €14 million (19.5 million yuan).

Duan Yuhong, from Yuanmingyuan Society of China, said the process was "much tougher than people thought."

Duan said recovery is a complicated job involving many parties with conflicting interests. Diplomatic, legal and historical considerations further complicate the issue.

"We need to be patient," Duan said.

Houhai bridge closes for restoration

By Zhao Hongyi

Yingding Bridge, the only bridge across Houhai connecting the Lotus Market, Shicha-

hai Bar Street and Yandai Xiejie, closed for restoration on October 17.

Workers are tearing down

the streetlights in nearby areas amidst piles of construction materials. A makeshift five-meter floating bridge is

expected to open this weekend to allow lake crossing during the next several months.

Only tourists, passengers and bicycles are allowed on the floating bridge. Vehicles will be required to take another route around the lake, municipal traffic police said.

The bridge was last restored during the early 1980s. The municipal transportation bureau and city maintenance bureau of Xicheng District said traffic in the area will be tightly controlled during the next few months.

"Vehicles can still drive along the banks, but not on streets connected to the north and south of the bridge," said Qin Yuxi, supervisor of area traffic.

Tourists frequently park their vehicles on the two banks of the lake. Because of the risk of traffic jams while the bridge is out, they are being required to park farther away, Qin said.

The restoration was scheduled to begin on October 9, but the late start has many vendors worrying whether or not the city can adhere to its timetable.

"I hope the restoration won't ruin my business," Yang Fulin, a restaurant operator on the street, said. He is hoping to receive more tourists from the northern route with the bridge out.

For most Houhai businesses, winter marks the off season. Some bar owners said they expect the restored bridge to bring a new surge in business next spring.

Houhai is a popular night life destination for the city's foreign residents. Its bar street provides exotic cuisine and Yandai Xiejie offers unique souvenirs. But more famously, the area is a bastion of history and traditional Beijing culture.

The restored bridge is expected to open in January.



Workers are demolishing the old bridge to prepare for reconstruction.

CFP Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

Chinese couples are breaking up at an unprecedented rate. Despite traditional values that emphasize family unity and filial piety, husbands and wives of the '80s generation just can't seem to stay together.

The trend is a constant worry for relatives, friends and other new couples.

But when taken in the context of China's 30 years of economic growth, the surge in divorce may be more an expression of prosperity than the faults of a lone generation.

When marriages can't weather three years



People born in the 1980s face high pressure in life and work. Their marriages are more fragile than ever.

CFP Photo

Divorce the norm

Wang Jue and Jin Wen were born in 1985. Having met as classmates and after four years together at university, their love was the envy of friends and colleagues. The two tied the knot in 2008 during the Beijing Olympic Games.

Their marriage came to an end on October 1: National Day this year.

Wang complained that in their three years of marriage, Jin relied on him for everything: she was a failure at cooking, washing, cleaning and conception, and yet demanded his affection and money. Jin complained that her husband did not earn enough money or do housework, and that he upset her daily routine.

"I'm completely tired of and fed up with the marriage," Wang said. "The breakup is a relief for us both."

Divorce has climbed hand-in-hand with incomes for seven years. A total of 848,000 couples divorced during the first half of this year, up from 771,000 last year. That is 5,000 couples every day, according to China's Ministry of Civil Affairs.

The number would double when adjusted to include divorces mediated by the courts.

Last year, a total of 2.47 million couples divorced: 1.8 million through mutual breakup and 666,000 through court orders.

These numbers paint a dark picture when one considers that nearly half of the registered divorces were of young couples born in the 1980s.

Divorce with Chinese characteristics

"A simplification of the divorce procedure is partly to blame," said Zhang Xueren, a professor of social studies at Peking University.

On August 8, 2003, the government passed sweeping revisions to its Law of Marriage Registration. Almost immediately the divorce rate began its exponential ascent.

One Chinese proverb says that a marriage can hardly

stand seven years. For the young generation, these words of wisdom are being rounded down.

"Young adults are distracted by new attractions like career, money and benefits," Zhang said. Many cannot or will not invest their time and effort in marriage and divorce. They wed within days of meeting and divorce at the first dispute.

"They are not willing to

show patience to their spouse," he said.

Tolerance, it seems, is equally elusive.

Many young adults, having being doted on by both parents and grandparents, were raised to believe they could do no wrong. Rarely do they make concessions during marital disputes.

But disloyalty and betrayal may lie at the heart of many of

these breakups. Nearly 75 percent of divorces are initiated by young wives. Some cite this statistic as a sign that women are gaining rights and independence in marriage as their economic status improves.

"But women used to be the ones who provided stability to marriages and families," Zhang said, "Now they are competing to get the upper hand and command respect."

A new generation

"The generation born in the 1980s has a different character," said Cong Aiqin, director of Women's Studies at Beijing Academy of Social Sciences.

"Most of these young people are very self-centered. They lack a strong sense of responsibility to society and their families, and are critical of others and demanding," she said.

The family planning policy that created decades of singletons may be partly to blame.

The overbearing love of parents for their "only" child shielded many from essential opportunities to build character through hardship. To the outside world, these shortcomings are most obvious in their work ethic and the ability to manage money.

Things are worse within the home.

Few '80s children can manage housework, preferring instead to employ others to clean up after them, wash their clothes and take care of their babies.

The less well-off simply conscript their parents.

The media has termed this first generation of singletons a "lost generation": one "mercurial in manner" and "ignorant of responsibilities."

The constant condemnation has affected many like He Tao, a freelancer born in 1987, who wrote that the mixing of the negative labels with more positive ones like "enthusiastic" and "obedient" has left him and others confused.

Now the labels are being recycled for the '90s generation.

Part of a trend

Cong said these young couples are just entering society. "They are still adjusting their life to come to terms with mainstream expectations," she said.

"It will take time while they fall into their expected social roles, so it may be too early to declare the 'flash marriage' phenomenon a harmful one," she said.

Indeed, the divorce rate has always been on the rise, said Xu Anqi, director of the Institute of Women Studies from Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

Xu has been studying and charting divorce for a decade. Since economic reforms began in the late 1970s, divorce has risen steadily.

"The explosion in divorce might simply be a reflection of newfound

economic independence and self-confidence," Xu said.

Life pressure, competition and the estrangement of close friends has also made many marriages fragile, said Han Xiangjin, chief editor of *Chinese Women* magazine.

With 1.7 breakups per 1,000 couples, China's divorce rate ranked 50th of 84 countries and regions surveyed in 2009 by the UN: the same rank it held in 1999.

This shows that the rate is still comparatively normal, Xu Anqi said. She expects the divorce rate to continue its current trend and drop off during the next decade.

Now, Jin Wen has mixed feelings about her life after the divorce.

"I'm sure that he will come back to me, sooner or later," she said.

Blueprint for China's future

Country's new development plan stirs global attention



The world is watching as the country crafts its development plan for the next five years.

Mai Tian/CFP Photo

The world is watching how far China's top leadership will go in crafting measures for its future development. The just-concluded Fifth Plenum of the 17th Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, which examined and approved proposals for formulating the development plan for the next five years (2011-2015), provides an answer.

The economic and social development agenda of a single country rarely raises broad concern among the international community, but China, whose development is closely related to the rest of the world, is one of the few exceptions.

In the eyes of the world media, the five-year development blueprint is a weather vane indicating the direction of China's future development.

Many foreign news wires have taken note of China's goal of consolidating the basis of building a well-off society, of boosting domestic demand and transforming China's economic development pattern.

A Reuters report talked about the country's commitment to lifting the incomes and spending power of hundreds of millions of farmers and workers.

Another reason the world is closely watching China's blueprint for the near future is that there

are plenty of opportunities in it.

The country's huge market and stable economic growth indicate robust domestic demand, which, in turn, will bring great export opportunities to its trading partners and inject more vitality into the global economy.

Some foreign media have already pointed out that the blueprint's goal to transform China's economic development pattern will provide the world's big enterprises and multinational companies with new opportunities.

The *Financial Times* reported in a recent article that one of the most significant aspects of China's new development agenda would be more emphasis on energy efficiency and carbon emissions reduction.

China's progress in developing alternative energies such as solar, wind and nuclear power will have a profound effect on those industries, it said.

(Agencies)

Analyst

Inclusive growth key to nation's future development

For most people, the notion of "inclusive growth" may still be unfamiliar, but it promises a new strategy for China's future development.

The concept was first created and advocated by Asian Development Bank (ADB) economists in 2007. Recent remarks by Chinese President Hu Jintao on inclusive growth have triggered speculation that Chinese policy makers were refining their perspective on development to include this concept.

Hu said inclusive growth means spreading the benefits of economic globalization and development among all countries, regions and people and to realize balanced economic and social progress through sustainable development.

"Inclusive growth is a new idea that will help China tackle emerging challenges; it is very crucial to the future direction of the country's development," said Zuo Xiaolei, chief economist at China Galaxy Securities.

During the past three

decades, China's economy has witnessed an amazing boom, in line with the policy initiated by the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping of allowing certain regions and groups of people to become prosperous first.

The country's astounding economic growth, however, hides a series of problems. The most obvious is that there is a significant difference in the outlook of various regions and the livelihoods of their population.

According to a World Bank report, the Gini coefficient for China, a main gauge of income disparity, surged to 0.47 in 2009, exceeding the warning line of 0.4. The figure was 0.21-0.27 three decades ago.

"The emerging problems make fostering inclusive growth an issue of practical significance for China as the idea seeks to ensure equal access to opportunities and balances economic and social development with environmental costs," said Wang Jun, a researcher with the China Center for International Economic Exchanges.

One key tenet of inclusive growth is sharing, which means to let people share the fruits of economic development in a just and fair manner, Zuo said.

In the domestic context, inclusive growth means a country's economic and social development should guarantee a higher living standard for its people while not imposing serious damages on the environment, Wang said.

He said the term also meant that a country's growth should not restrict or hinder the development of other countries.

China's policy makers have realized that the traditional development pattern, which greatly relied on exports and investment, is no longer sustainable, analysts said. China's macroeconomic regulation in the next five years would focus on transforming economic growth patterns and adjusting economic structures, while inclusive growth would play an important role during the process, they said.

(Xinhua News Agency)

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Era of Web sales

Retailers target China's Internet for online sales

By Huang Daohen

How do luxury brands target their eager Chinese consumers? Building impressive flagship stores in the country may be popular today, but the future may lie online.

With more than 420 million Internet users, many luxury brands are looking for new ways to tap into the country's lucrative e-commerce market.

Online sales surge

Lee Lin, the 27-year-old technical director of a local software company, just received his new laptop. But unlike his past purchases, this laptop was obtained without a long trip to the crowded Zhongguancun marketplace and hours spent haggling with a salesman.

Lee bought his 12,000 yuan ThinkPad online.

"For people like me, who don't like shopping and bargaining, buying online is great," Lee said. He ordered the computer over the e-commerce website 360buy.com.

"It saved me time and energy," he said. "I even didn't have to pay a deposit, just the full price when I received the delivery two days later."

Lee is among a rising group of buyers who now prefer to shop online.

"When we talk about buying things online, we're no longer talking about cheap trinkets," said Meng Zhaoli, a senior e-commerce analyst at iResearch, a local Internet research firm.

Meng said customers, especially young women, used to buy only cheap accessories on Taobao.com, the nation's biggest online marketplace. But now people are turning to the Internet to purchase laptops, digital cameras and cars.

"The trend is helping China's e-commerce market to take off," Meng said.

According to iResearch's latest report, online retail sales increased by 117 percent last year; in the first half this year, sales soared 60 percent with a transaction volume of 2.25 trillion yuan.

Driving the trend are China's 420 million Internet users, 130 million of whom are shopping, the report said.

Top brands target Web

Online sales are expanding as companies from home and abroad set up Web stores to cut costs and improve efficiency. The *Financial Times* reported that the US retailer Wal-Mart and clothing giant Gap will open online stores in China, tapping into the fast-growing market.

Wal-Mart will open a website for its Sam's Club warehouse chain stores to promote sales, the London-based newspaper reported.

Eduardo Castro-Wright, Wal-Mart's head of e-commerce, said last week that he was excited about the opportunity for online sales in China. The company expects the country's e-commerce market to catch up to the US within five years.

Castro-Wright did not say when the Wal-Mart e-commerce site would open.

However, Gap said it will open its Chinese online store next month, following an announcement that it will open its first four stores in Beijing and Shanghai

Walmart

沃尔玛



Overseas investors are eyeing China's online opportunity. CFP Photo

this year.

Others global retailers are also moving to leverage the trend. Sportswear giant adidas opened an online store on Taobao in August, and Japan's Uniqlo began e-commerce business in China last year.

"I think it is something that is long overdue," Meng said, noting that the online sales could be revolutionary for foreign retailers.

"What online websites, both Taobao and the manufacturers' own sites, offer is not just a new channel, but a new way to reach consumers," Meng said.

Particular Internet habits

But Meng said that companies must still adapt to Chinese Web users' particular Internet habits.

Unlike US consumers, who are notorious skeptics, Meng said Chinese are likely to trust official information and turn to a retailer's

website for product information.

"That's a big difference, as Western consumers prefer to consult third-party opinions," she said.

Meng suggested a better way to reach Chinese consumers is for retailers to start their own online communities or forums.

Chinese consumers often visit Web forums and blogs before they make purchasing decisions. "The Internet can be risky, as there are all sorts of information out there - including some that is fake or misleading," Meng said. "But in order to gain control, having an official online presence can make a big difference."

The computer company Dell, for example, has already done this. It partnered with Renren.com, a local social networking site, to create a platform for consumers to discuss the pros and cons of its products.

Related

Geely to sell cars online

Global retailers are riding the wave of the Web market, and so is Li Shufu, president and founder of Geely Auto. Li stunned the industry recently when he announced plans to start selling cars online.

Li told an auto forum in Hangzhou last month that he plans to sell cars on Alibaba, the nation's biggest e-commerce website.

"If you don't try, you will never know if it will work or not," Li told Xinhua in an interview. He said the company has been planning Web sales for a long time and that its first online shop will open early next year.

Buying cars online may be too much for consumers.

Meng Zhaoli, a senior e-commerce analyst at the Internet research firm iResearch, said she remains guarded about Li's decision.

"Buying a car is a major expenditure for Chinese people, and I believe most customers want to have a close look at new cars and experience them in person," Meng said.

Meng said automobile websites as information providers refer people to dealers, and said that online sales are unlikely to become the norm within three to five years.

"The Web market may be surging, but it is not mature enough for such big-ticket transactions," Meng said.

However, Li said he still believes now is the right time for online sales.

"While there is no successful example, I believe the Internet is an effective and revolutionary platform to showcase new models for Geely," he said.

Country raises key rate for the first time since 2007

The central bank Tuesday announced a rise of its benchmark one-year lending and deposit rate by 0.25 percent, a move widely seen as a government attack on inflation.

The People's Bank of China said on its website that the one-year deposit rate will rise from 2.25 percent to 2.50 percent, and the one-year lending rate will increase from 5.31 percent to 5.56 percent.

The rise had not been anticipated and could be related to the impending September statistics and the third quarter statistics, said Jiang Chao, an analyst with Guotai Junan Securities.

The consumer price index (CPI), a key gauge of inflation, may maintain its high level in September, Jiang said.

The rate hike was the first in three years. The central bank last hiked rates on December 21, 2007.

The benchmark interest rate has been cut four times since the global financial crisis.

Li Daokui, a member of the central bank's monetary policy committee, said statistics showed China's economy has been bottoming out from the accelerated slump at the beginning of this year, but prices of goods remain at a high level, attracting the attention of policy makers.

"Judging by the move, worries about soaring prices overwhelmed jitters over economic growth, as that is the main reason for the interest rate hike. Negative interest rate (higher CPI increases than the deposit interest rate) is also another reason," Li said.

Liu Yuhui, an expert at the Institute of Finance and Banking at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said the rate hike is related to expectations of inflation as the negative interest rate has continued for seven months.

The country has seen price increases in agricultural products, urban services like rent and catering, Liu said.

"We believed it was caused by soaring labor costs, and also related to the issue of currencies and soaring living costs in cities," Li said.

China's CPI hit a 22-month high of 3.5 percent in August. The inflation index not only exceeds 2.25 percent on a one-year deposit rate and 2.79 percent on a two-year deposit rate, but also surpasses 3.33 percent on a three-year deposit rate.

Experts said the interest rate hike works more as an alert rather than directly reducing the negative interest rate.

"The move shows the government's determination to curb negative interest rates and inflation so that businesses and consumers can adjust their investment and consumption accordingly," Liu said.

(Xinhua News Agency)

Gov regulates the spelling of names, stresses education

By Zhao Hongyi

The National Language and Words Working Committee recently released a set of Chinese language rules that aims to nationalize usage and prevent confusion.

One of the rules states that Chinese surnames should precede given names. This is the way it's been done for thousands of years in China, but the introduction of English – where surnames come last – has muddled the situation for some.

Other changes include when to write out numbers using characters instead of Arabic numbers.

Also, names of certain places will be formally changed: "Beijing University" instead of Peking University, "Wangfujing Dajie" instead of Wangfujing Street, and "Qinghua University" instead of Tsinghua.

The lack of a formalized grammar and spelling system is an obstacle in communicating with foreigners, said Li Yuming, director of the Chinese Words Regulating Department in the Ministry of Education and deputy director of the Words

Working committee.

Technical corrections and evaluations have been completed, the director said. They are currently awaiting final administrative approval for publication.

The director criticized Chinese universities for their lack of interest and enthusiasm in adhering to these rules. Since universities obtained the right to enroll students and arrange courses by themselves in 2003, they have dedicated too many resources to teaching English, the director said.

Four universities in Shanghai, including Tongji University and Donghua University, stopped testing for Chinese in their entrance exams, which led to nationwide criticism.

What is more worrying is the weakening of Chinese education in primary and secondary schools. Students lack interest and schools lack enthusiasm.

"How we can stimulate interest in education is a great task that lies ahead," Li said.

Comment

Balance the subjects

It's a good thing to raise awareness of Chinese teaching and learning. It's not bad to emphasize the importance of learning English, but the key point is to balance subjects, including mathematics, physics, chemistry and others, especially during students' basic nine-year elementary education.

— She Zhongming, Chinese linguistic scholar

Be careful of tradition

It's obvious and natural to write your family name in front and given name afterwards. We

give up Chinese and focus on the teaching and learning of English, but be careful! Your ancestors will come back and condemn you. We should proudly speak and write Chinese in the world.

— Xiao Lihong, commentator

Study Chinese first

Chinese has a history exceeding 3,000 years. It is still usable in the IT era, very compatible with our computers, which shows how dynamic the language is. It is also an official language of the United Nations. Why should we drop it in favor of English? We should

study Chinese first.

— Rong Jie, university student

Enforce the law

It's not enough to release the rules and expect all 1.4 billion Chinese people to follow. We need to impose laws to force the implementation of standard Chinese usage, as well as educate people in how to properly use the language.

It's unfortunate that in basic elementary education, we don't have a clear picture of Chinese characters, their origins and meanings.

— "lonely journey," BBS commentator

'4' removed from Beijing license plates

By Chu Meng

Chinese superstition strikes again. The number four, *si*, which is a homonym of the word for "die," will no longer be used on vehicle license plates. The change took effect Monday at the Beijing Vehicle Registration Center.

Under the current vehicle registration system, a Beijing car buyer can choose his or her own license plate number out of 10 automatically generated results.

Wang Hai, an official from the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau, complained that "every time a plate with the number 4 is generated, the plate will inevitably not be selected. After so many years, the license plate

pool is filled with tens of thousands of such 'bad luck' plates, and they are really harming the efficiency of the system."

This is causing a big problem because of a recent traffic-reduction policy. As there are more than 4.5 million vehicles in Beijing, there's a law that takes one-fifth of cars off the road every day according to the last digit of vehicles' license plate number.

Since there are far fewer cars with the number 4, serious traffic jams ensue on days when "4" is designated as one of the forbidden numbers.

"Should such regulations be influenced by folk superstition?" said Mao Liding, a worried car owner.

Comment

Respect customs

There is no one to blame here. Local customs should be respected.

The truth is that because of the supposed auspiciousness of certain numbers, many people often choose or attempt to obtain (sometimes by paying lots of money) numbers that are considered lucky. The vehicle registration center is simply reacting to this fact.

— Li Ruixiang,

Beijing International Institute for Urban Development

Chinese culture

I take it as a part of Chinese culture. And I have noticed that because the number 4 is considered unlucky, many numbered product lines skip the 4. For example, Canon's PowerShot G series goes from the G3

straight to the G5.

It's interesting that in Hong Kong, some high-rise residential buildings literally skip all floors with the number 4, in addition to not having a 13th floor. As a result, a building whose highest floor is "50" may actually have only 35 physical floors.

— Kristin Welle Strand, media officer in Norwegian Embassy in Beijing

Wiser administration

Regulations from government and administrative bodies should be solemn and serious, steering clear of folk customs. [The recent move] will only foster unreasonable superstition.

Also, what if people want the number 4 in their license plate?

— Yang Xiaogang, the Beijing Public Security Bureau



The number four will no longer be used on vehicle license plates in Beijing.

CFP Photo



Jorge Remon Garcia practices writing his Chinese name in calligraphy.

By Liang Meilan

An event called Global Mandarin Talent Contest, hosted by Radio Beijing Corporation (RBC), is gaining popularity among foreigners. Opened in June, it invites Chinese-speaking foreigners both inside and outside China to upload videos of themselves performing a Chinese-related talent. The public then votes on the website talent.rbc.cn.

Nine people have been declared "winners" in the past three months. The contest will continue until November 30.

"We're using the Internet to let more people show their love of Chinese culture," said Ji Liehong, manager of an RBC foreign-language station.

Advertisements for this contest have appeared on domestic websites, social networking sites like Facebook and the Confucius Institute's website.

Foreigners shine in Mandarin talent contest



Winners of last year's contest jointly perform at a Chinese talent show.

Photos provided by Chen Wei

Of the 160 people who have uploaded videos so far, only 31 live outside China. But it's this group of people who "uploaded videos of higher quality," Ji said.

Dyana da Silva Faustino, a

woman from Brazil, was a winner last month. She performed a Chinese pop song called "Have to Love" with her friend.

Faustino is currently working at a Chinese travel agency

in Sao Paulo. She developed her interest in Mandarin through communication with Chinese tourists she picks up every day at the airport. "I was determined to learn the language to

better serve them," she said.

Jorge Remon Garcia, another winner, is a student majoring in Arabic and Asian languages at the Autonomous University of Madrid. He won for his rendition of a story from Chinese mythology.

Fascinated by Chinese culture, Garcia frequently visits China, where he has established close relationships with several people. His website, chinosfera.com, introduced China to people in Spain when it was launched two years ago.

Chinosfera has become a major portal for Spanish speakers everywhere who want information about ancient and contemporary China. "It is also the first website for Spanish speakers who want to learn Chinese through pre-recorded audio, which is available for free," Garcia said.

Ji said he is very happy to see contestants taking the competition seriously.

"The event is not a runway for showing off," he said. "And it is not merely a place to learn Mandarin. We aim to create a community-driven platform for people who are interested in China to express and exchange viewpoints through diverse forms."

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Driving from Italy to China, without a driver?

By Han Manman

It's like a modern-day version of Marco Polo's journey halfway around the world – except Polo's caravan this time, strangely enough, is a pair of driverless cars instead of camels.

Over the summer, a team of Italian engineers launched what has been called the longest-ever test drive of unmanned vehicles – a 13,000-kilometer, three-month road trip from Italy to China – to test the limits of future automotive technology. The journey is expected to end next week in Shanghai.

If everything goes as planned, this will be a huge milestone in robotics – the first time in history that automated, electric vehicles have traveled an intercontinental route.



The team behind the Italy-China trip

Photos provided by VisLab

Half-world tour

If you find yourself on the road from Xi'an to Shanghai this weekend, you might encounter two pairs of small, orange vehicles on the road. They may look a bit different from your car in that they're covered with cameras and laser scanners – and don't have drivers.

Developed by the Artificial Vision and Intelligent Systems Laboratory (VisLab) at Parma University in Italy, these vehicles left Italy on July 20 and have already traveled through Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Hungary, Ukraine, Russia and Kazakhstan. They are expected to roll into Shanghai for the World Expo on October 28.

For each pair of vehicles, a

technician sits in a car leads an unmanned van. The humans are there to fix glitches and take over in case of an emergency, but otherwise they are passive passengers. The two pairs of vehicles are tailed by support trucks.

"We definitely need some human help. It is not possible to be 100 percent driverless. This is why I call it a test, not a demonstration," said VisLab lead researcher Alberto Broggi.

The European Research Council funded this project, called the VisLab Intercontinental Autonomous Challenge, in hopes of exploring better ways to transfer goods between continents.

"What we are trying to do is

adding stress to our systems to see if they can work in a real environment, with real weather, real traffic and crazy people who cross the road in front of you and vehicles that cut you off," Broggi said.

The technicians have had to intervene on limited occasions, such as at toll stations and in adverse weather conditions, and when encountering hitchhikers.

"People are very surprised when they see the vehicles are run autonomously. But so far, police haven't stopped us," Broggi said.

The vehicles travel at 60 kilometers per hour but need approximately eight hours to charge up after every two hours on the road.



Technicians repair the cars during a recharge.

Big challenges behind them

The vehicles have made it to their destination country – Broggi's team obtained permission from officials of every country they passed through – but things haven't always gone smoothly.

"The biggest challenges is always trying to understand what we have in front of us," Broggi said.

The vehicles are hard-pressed to adjust for reckless drivers, such as those who veer into its path. In Moscow, the unmanned vehicles had a difficult time staying within traffic lanes because of others' chaotic driving tendencies, Broggi said.

"It was impossible. In crowded areas, if no one is respecting the rules, there is no way to navigate. The only thing you can do is avoid hitting some-

one," Broggi said.

He said they also had some small accidents. In Russia, engineers turned off the vehicles' sensors but neglected to switch off the automatic driving mechanism.

"It was able to steer and drive, but it had no perception. It couldn't see anything," Broggi said. The vehicle drove straight into the rear of a driverless van parked 3 meters away.

Broggi said some accidents were even more "stupid." For example, one of the battery-powered vehicles, as it was being loaded onto a truck to be recharged, banged into the truck, taking off a bumper.

So far, however, there have been no big accidents.



The driverless cars have crossed half the world to arrive in Shanghai next week.



The car's inside

The future of driverless cars

The VisLab expedition has sparked interest among many Chinese who are curious about the feasibility of driverless vehicles in China.

"Driverless cars cannot work in cities, especially in places like Beijing or Shanghai that have big traffic problems and lots of crowded areas, and where few respect traffic rules," said Meng Yuan, a local. "Advanced machines can avoid problems through technical procedures, but in China, emergencies can create chaos, as machines aren't as flex-

ible as humans."

While a future where cars zip around without drivers seems like science fiction, elements of the technology have real-world applicability, Broggi said. For example, the car's scanners could be used on farming implements, allowing farmers to program tractors to plough and seed fields through the night.

VisLab isn't the only team working on unmanned vehicles. Google announced last week that it has developed driverless cars that have logged

more than 100,000 miles on real roads in real traffic. These cars, however, also need a person onboard as supervisor.

Google believes driverless vehicles can reduce the number of fatal car accidents by half if they ever hit the market.

"I don't know how long it'll be, but one day I may be able to get inside a car and have it take me to my destination," Broggi said. "I would get out and it would park itself, maybe in a place outside the city. Or maybe you could even start a car-sharing program."

Nordic crossover artists seek to redefine 'public space'

By Chu Meng

Crossover artistic groups from north European countries opened NOTCH10 on Monday, a display of contemporary art, design and music that seeks to promote creative thinking and cultural exchange.

NOTCH10 invites Nordic and Chinese creative groups to redefine the public space — especially in a society that's changing as fast as China's — by creating installations or decorations suitable for public display. Held in Sanlitun Village's Orange Hall, 30 artistic groups from countries like Iceland, Finland, Denmark and Sweden have set up displays related to architecture, music, dance and design.

The theme is "RE: PUBLIC." Artists and designers work eight hours a day, seven days a week to create what they can. Often they work without a particular goal in mind — the process of combining unfamiliar elements in real-time is part of the point.

"They have to work across forms they might have little knowledge of," said Wang Lin, one of the organizers. "At the same time, they need to sell their own thoughts in order to attract attention."

"The point is to be weird, to have fun and hopefully be part of something new," said Swedish musician Kristofer Strom.

Organizers want people in China to experience a bit of northern European culture and



Caroline Ektander, a Swedish experimental residency programmer from the Svensk Standard Studio, brings "floating lawn," a cutting-edge design for crowded cities such as Beijing.

Photo provided by Wang Lin

hopefully learn something from them.

"The current culture in countries such as Norway and Sweden pushes art and music in their education, and has helped create an interesting atmosphere," NOTCH promoter and DJ Patrick Yu said. "NOTCH is a good opportunity to diversify the local scene."

This is an opportunity "to

give direct exposure to both sides and to possibly help be a catalyst for things to come in the future," Yu said.

Zhang Bo, another organizer, said that the concerts scheduled from October 15 to 20 will present innovative sounds from Nordic countries. The NOTCH10 concert lineup includes the Norwegian jazz and rock trio Needlepoint;

an indie pop dance queen, Annie; a futuristic electronic trio called System; and Shogun Kunitoki, a Finnish psychedelic electronic rock group.

NOTCH10 is organized by iTOPIA management consulting Co. and is financially supported by the Norwegian, Sweden, Finnish, Danish and Icelandic embassies in Beijing.

Hutong gourmet cooking

By Liang Meilan

Beijing has no shortage of cooking classes for expats, but one that has flown under the radar is Fangjia Kitchen's class, which opened in August, that features demonstrations from chefs who fuse Western and Chinese styles.

The nighttime dining experience is particularly special, as diners are invited to indulge in feast an eight-course gourmet Chinese cuisine with unlimited red and white wines from France and Chile.

The chef who runs the event is Huang Chanzhu, executive chef of Zen Restaurant, which is hailed as one of the best Cantonese restaurants in Beijing. The International Cuisine Master Association honored Huang in 2005 for his excellence in Cantonese cooking.

Fangjia Kitchen has invited other top chefs in town to teach traditional Chinese dishes. Each class focuses on a particular region's cuisine. Especially popular are Sichuan dishes, Beijing-style dumplings and homemade noodles, classic Cantonese dishes and vegetarian dishes.

"This hands-on cooking class combines seasonal dining with food cultures and the chefs' personal stories," said Fangjia



Students are learning to cook sweet and sour pork.

Photo by Yu Xiao

founder Jessie Zhang.

Recent classes have taught participants how to cook Shaoerdong (braised mushrooms with bamboo shoots), disanxian (deep fried and sautéed eggplant, potatoes and green peppers) and mutton dumplings.

The kitchen is located in a hutong built in 1760 for Qianlong Emperor's second son, Xunjun. "There's an antique environment," Zhang said. "It's an ideal place for people to relax."

James Hunt from Australia is

one of the students in the kitchen. As this is his third time in China, he no longer goes to traditional tourist spots like the Great Wall.

"I want to find more hands-on activities," he said. "I heard about Fangjia Kitchen from a friend, so I came and tried a

dumping class."

Hunt said he had lots of fun and that it was nice to work in a courtyard setting. "I can see real Beijingers' life here," he said.

Private classes and small parties can be booked three days in advance.

Fangjia Kitchen

Where: 13 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng District
When: Cooking: Thursday - Sunday, 11 am - 2 pm;
dining: Friday and Saturday, 6:30-9:30 pm
Cost: 300 yuan per class
Tel: 15910962965

Event

Classic lunch with Janice YK Lee

Janice YK Lee, author of the bestseller *The Piano Teacher*, will discuss her favorite classic, *Emma* by Jane Austin, over a lively literary lunch at the Bookworm. Born and raised in Hong Kong, where she now lives with her husband and children, Lee graduated from Harvard and was a features editor at both *Elle* and *Mirabella* magazines. The *Piano Teacher*, her first novel, has been translated into 24 languages and is a New York Times bestseller. It was a Book Sense Pick, chosen to be part of Barnes and Noble's "Discover New Writers" program and was the January "Borders Recommends" fiction pick.

Where: Bookworm, 4 Nanshanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: October 22, noon - 1:30 pm

Tel: 6586 9507

Cost: 150 yuan includes lunch, tea and coffee

Breastfeeding support group

La Leche League is an international, nonprofit, non-sectarian organization dedicated to providing education, information, support and encouragement to women who want to breastfeed. All breastfeeding mothers and pregnant women interested in breastfeeding are welcome to come. Every fourth Friday of every month, members meet in The Yurt at Beijing United Family Hospital. A soft crawling and lying area is provided for babies.

Where: Beijing United Family Hospital, 2 Jiangtai Lu, Chaoyang District

When: October 22, 1:30-3 pm

Tel: 13910306022

Cost: Free

Tour for exploring eunuch art

Hidden in the western hills of Beijing are some temples and tombs visited by few travelers. The religious fresco there are among the best in Chinese art. Paradoxically, the temples were not built by monks or artists. They were also not sponsored by the royal family. The founders were eunuchs — the royal servants. Besides enjoying the masterpieces, we will also explore the life of eunuchs. This tour is not only a perfect chance to explore Chinese culture, but also a great chance to discover real suburban residences.

Where: Meet in front of the McDonald's at Ginza Mall (Dongfang Yinzu), 48 Dongzhimen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: October 23, 1-7 pm

Tel: 15117916648

Cost: 160 yuan, 20 percent off for children under 16 (By Liang Meilan)

Beijingers can soon use mobile phones to pay transit fares

By Chu Meng

Mobile phones can be used in lieu of IC cards to pay for public bus and subway fares in Beijing starting next month, China Unicom announced on Monday.

China Unicom launched pilot programs for its mobile payment services in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing in May. The program will be formally launched in November.

The system will gradually be put into place in other cities nationwide next year.

Under China Union's new technology application, users can acquire a new SIM card or special new mobile phones in its business hall to access the service. Also, users can recharge their mobile phones at prepaid service sites using IC-card-recharge procedures.

However, the mobile phone bills will be separated from traffic payment account. The maximum amount of money a user can have in his or her prepaid account is 1,000 yuan.

Convenience can be accompanied by security deficiencies, experts warn. Users are advised to assign a password to their accounts.



Mobile phones can be used to pay traffic fares next month.

Nan Shan / CFP Photo

"Since people use mobile phones all the time and everywhere, a solid, mature and secure payment system should be guaranteed for customers," said Xiang Ligang, a Chinese telecommunication expert.

Xiang said that special SIM cards may eventually be used

to pay for parking, refueling, movies, shopping and other daily transactions.

Xiang said that paying with mobile phones is part of a growing trend in the telecommunication industry in China.

Some concerns remain undressed, however. "What if my

mobile phone runs out of batter or suddenly breaks down in the morning?" said Zhai Jia, a Beijinger, and he added "I could do nothing but stay at home then."

He said a benefit to using ordinary cards is that they're not susceptible to the sort of breakdowns that affect electronic devices.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

Can you tell me where I can find a big-and-tall store in Beijing, preferably near Chaoyang Park? I am in need of some large-sized winter clothes. If not a store, an online shop would also be of great help.

In Beijing, big-and-tall stores are scattered in different malls and markets like Silk Market (Xiushui) and Yashow (Yaxiu). If you are in urgent need, we recommend a popular online shop called MD International, which specializes in Japanese-style clothes. Visit big-size.cn to see what they have.

Halloween is coming - where can I get a costume at a reasonable price? I've been to places like Yashow, Silk Market and Alien Street Market, where all the costumes are nearly identical and not very creative.

There are a lot of places to find good costumes. Here are three we like:

Xidan Minority World Market

This is an ideal place to find cheap items such as fake glasses. Some vendors here offer costumes fit for masquerades.

Where: 33 Xiaoshihu Hutong in Xidan commercial area, Xicheng District

Huarun Store in Wanda Plaza

This rental store specializes in costumes. You can find items rarely seen in other places, such as a suit of armor.

Where: 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

Online shops

Many online shops on Taobao.com sell creative and cheap costumes. Or you can shop at the American online shop HalloweenExpress.com.

It seems the weather has turned cold very rapidly, but the heaters in my apartment still don't work. My expat friends have told me there's a predetermined date for when the heat goes on in the city. What's the date this year?

November 15 is usually the first day we get heat every year, but the heating supply office said the heat will be delivered a little early this year if cold currents cause the temperature to dip below 5 C. The exact date hasn't been given yet, but there is a high probability your apartment will be warm in early November.

(By Liang Meilan)

CCTV tower climbing contest welcomes Foreign challengers

By Chu Meng

Like climbing stairs? There's a contest for you.

The 16th China Central Television (CCTV) Tower stair-climbing competition opened for registration on Monday. The contest is open to anyone willing to climb the 1,597 stairs of the 405-meter-high tower on October 31.

The winner will receive 10,000 yuan.

Registration is open at cntv.cn/dengta. People can also call the competition committee at 6705 0772 from 9 am to 6 pm on weekdays.

Registration will close once the quota of 300 contestants is filled.

"Interested stair-climbing fans from international countries should contact us sooner than later," said Liu Wenbin, contest director at the Beijing Sports Competitions Administration Center.

Shao Yuyin holds the record for fastest climb, doing it in 9 minutes and 51 seconds in 2005.

The CCTV tower is recognized among the World Federation of Great Towers. At 405 meters, it is the fifth highest tower in the world.

People can take an elevator to an outdoor observation balcony that's 238 meters high. From there, they can see the Western Hills and Summer Palace, and even glimpses of

Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City and the new CCTV headquarters at East Third Ring Road.

The sport of stair climbing is relatively young, but competitions are held around the world every year.

World-class athletes, including runners and cyclists, regularly compete in such events. Some athletes train specifically for stair climbing.

Fan Zhihong, a Chinese health professional at China Agricultural University, said stair climbing is one of the most grueling sports, as it requires competitors to move their body against gravity. Essentially, a normal 30-minute workout can be achieved in just 15 minutes of stair climbing.

"Green hands should start from basic training," Fan said.

She added that stair climbing is excellent for cross-training. Runners, swimmers, cyclists, rowers and soccer players are especially attracted to the activity, which really works leg muscles.

Registration

Where: Room 32, 3rd floor, 1 South Building, Ciqikou Dajie, Chongwen District (Ciqikou station of subway Line 5)

Tel: (8610) 6705 0772; 13641303850

Open: 9 am - 6 pm,

Monday - Friday

Charge: Free



CCTV's stair-climbing competition has attracted hundreds of challengers from multiple countries since its inception 16 years ago.

Andy / CFP Photo

Long-distance walk in Changping

By Li Zhixin

To encourage people to lead a healthy lifestyle, the Beijing International Long Distance Walk Carnival will open October 30 in Changping District, with a main route that winds through the Ming Tombs Reservoir.

"The activity aims to put 'green travel' ideas into effect," said Qi

Zhiguo, director of the carnival's organizing committee. "We hope people can have fun walking and spread this healthy activity."

The event coincides with the opening of the Changping Apple Culture Festival. Participants who finish the walk will be gifted apples from the Changping government, along with a certification from the

organizing committee.

Those interested in participating should contact the committee at 5914 7861, 5914 7862 or 8974 1642, or visit bjcpn.com/apple2010.

The carnival originated in 1981. It is jointly sponsored by the Youth League Beijing Committee, Beijing Tourism Administration and Changping district government.

Imagining beyond form

Frank Gehry brings first exhibition to Beijing

By Han Maunman

Some people are destined for debate. Frank Gehry is one of them. The 81-year-old Pritzker Prize-winner is that rare kind of architect who has garnered both critical acclaim and popular fame. Some say his designs are "exaggerated," "crude" or "weird," while others say Gehry is a genius and architectural icon.

But no one can deny his work.

Gehry has brought his designs to Beijing for Frank Gehry Architect, his first personal exhibition in China of his life and work.

The exhibition's opening ceremony last Sunday was crowded with people eager to meet the man known as the Picasso of architecture.

His selection of projects spans the architect's career, including his most celebrated buildings, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, known for putting Bilbao "on the map," and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles, one of the great performance venues in the world.

Through drawings, models, photographs and video footage, visitors can follow the unique creative journey of this exceptional architect.

It also unveils the entire creative process behind Gehry's first residential development in Asia: Swire Properties' 53 Stubbs Road in Hong Kong, due to be completed in 2012.

"It's quite hard to understand Gehry's works. They are bold, imaginative and impressive. I just want to say they are really unique," Shi Yunpeng, a visitor, said.

"I could feel through Gehry's buildings that he believes architecture is art. His undulating metal exteriors often look more like sculptures than buildings, which is something rarely seen in China," Xu Jie, a local student of architecture, said.

Gehry shows through his exhibition that architecture is art and should have feeling — an element he finds Chinese buildings sorely lack.

He takes Beijing as an example.

While Beijing has seen a surge of construction, its overly commercial buildings show few, if any, signs of art.

"Most of the buildings look the same. That's very disappointing because they could look so different," Gehry said. "We are not machines after all. So, if you make buildings that are machines, they won't feel good."

For Gehry, imbuing his designs with feeling is the most crucial step. His greater goal is to understand and interpret art in a way that helps humanity.

"Art is a part of my life and I have been especially fond of classical and contemporary art since I was a child," Gehry said.

"I grew up with classical music. My mother played the violin and took me to see her concerts when I was a kid. She also took me to see museums. I was interested in art ever since," he said.

His path in life is considerably easier to understand than his work.

Born in a Jewish family in Toronto in 1929, he moved to Los Angeles at 17.

His road to becoming an architect began the traditional way. After graduating from the University of Southern California's School of Architecture in 1954, Gehry worked for several firms in the 1950s and '60s before opening his own firm, Frank O. Gehry and Associates, in 1967.

It was several years before he broke out of traditional architectural modes even though he experimented in the design of his own home. His love of Picasso and cubism is expressed in the shapes of the windows and chain-link fences that surround the house.

That changed when a houseguest asked Gehry why he was so creative with his own home, but so reserved and traditional in the execution of his work.

That opened for him a new direction.

Gehry began using unusual chain link and corrugated metal in some of his designs. He also started experimenting with curvilinear shapes and unorthodox surfaces.

The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is Gehry's most iconic and representative work, a culmination of his journey in this new direction. Other major works that follow similar forms include the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, the Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis and Millennium Park in Chicago.

His design inspirations come from life. "I have had a curiosity about things, about all things, since I was a child," he said. "I think creativity is about curiosity. You always question why is it like that? Why does it have to be like that? Can it be this? Can it be that? I love to explore things. But I don't realize I do it."

Of course, his work has its critics. Many say his buildings are out of scale with their surrounding neighborhoods, and that the spectacle of the buildings themselves overwhelm their intended purpose.

However, the words of the Pritzker jury sum up the feelings most have about Gehry's work.

"His sometimes controversial, but always arresting body of work has been variously described as iconoclastic, rambunctious and impermanent. But the jury, in making this award, commends this restless spirit that has made his buildings a unique expression of contemporary society and its ambivalent values."

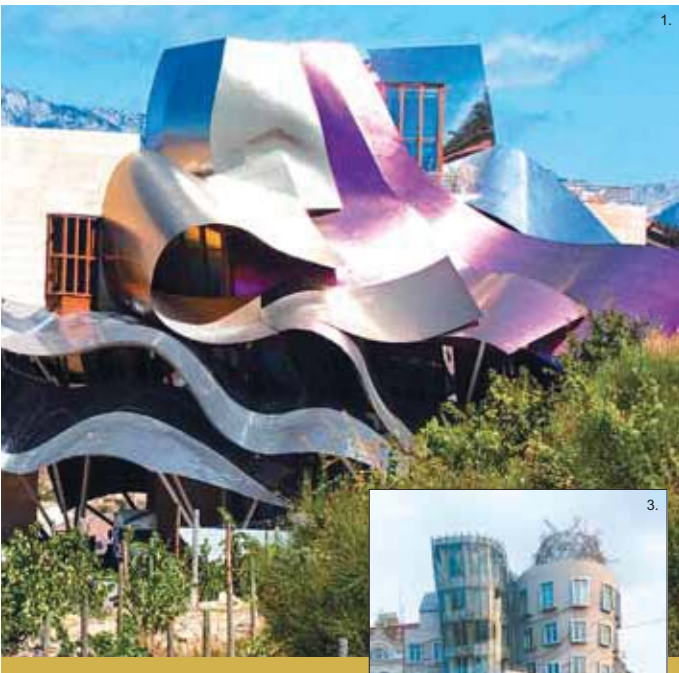


4. IAC Building
5. 53 Stubbs Road Residential development (HK)
6. The New Zollhof
7. Guggenheim Museum Bilbao



1. Home
2. Villa
3. Nat...

orm



tel at Marques De Riscal
y
Olimpica Fish Sculpture
ional-Netherland Building

photos provided by Frank Gehry



Interview with Frank Gehry

Beijing Today (BT): Which building in Beijing most impressed you?

Frank Gehry (FG): I love the CCTV building very much. I think the building possesses a skill and a direction that is unique. It's part of urban culture, which I don't think has been done in a long time.

BT: Many of Beijing's symbolic buildings are designed by foreign architects. Many people in Beijing say the city is losing its character and that the designs of foreign architects do not suit it. What's your opinion?

FG: Well, I think architecture is a service we are hired to do. Foreign architects have to understand the city's history and respect it. I think it is important to consider the place, the time and the people and their extraordinary culture.

BT: Have you ever run out of ideas?

FG: No. I can always find a way. I love constant innovation.

BT: What is your next step?

FG: More China works. I want to seek some opportunities here. It's exciting. The country is dynamic, growing, optimistic and worthy of exploring. It's not sleepy. Some of the current work made me feel bored and I need a challenge.

BT: What's your favorite thing to do outside your work?

FG: Ice hockey. I played until two years ago on a team where all the players were over 30 years old. It's fun. I'm also a sailor and I'm designing my own boat. I go sailing every Sunday.

BT: What kind of life will you lead after retirement?

FG: I want to live in the house I'm in now. I'm very comfortable where I am with my family and two Shar Peis. But I'm not retiring. I will never ever retire!



Frank Gehry Architect

Where: 8 Sanlitun Village North, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 30, daily, 11 am - 9 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6413 2696

Inspired by their journey

Italian and Chinese writers talk travel



Sandra Petrignani (left) observes the living conditions of the poor for inspiration.

Photo by Li Zhixin

By Li Zhixin

Twelve Italian and Chinese writers met with college students in Tianjin to discuss travel and literature last Thursday. The meet-up was organized by the Italian Institute of Culture as part of its Sino-Italy Literature Seminar.

Sandra Petrignani, 58, introduced two of her travel books, *Ultima India* (1996) and *In the Middle of the River: Walk Between the Two Centers of Rome* (2010).

"My travel in India allowed me to observe and experience living conditions of the country's poor, which inspired me later to contrast their situation with that of the poor in my country. So when I came back to Rome, I began to learn about our own poor," Petrignani said.

As an ongoing theme in her work, Petrignani expressed interest in learning more about poverty in China. "But China is so big, so it takes time to know the real China," she said.

The trip was the columnist's second visit to Beijing. She said that although

she used to complain about Beijing's air, its quality has improved a lot in the past several years ago. "I can tell that the government's resolution to improve the environment is very firm," she said.

"However, I heard that it did so by forcing the worst polluting factories to move out of the city. I worry about what negative impact these factories will bring to the poor in their new locations."

Hong Ying, 48, a Chinese writer known for battles of the sexes, said travel drives her to think about her feeling for her hometown. "Marco Polo's travel to China in the 14th century introduced China to the West, but his writings also expressed this homesickness of traveling foreign lands," Hong said.

Years of travel in Europe elevated how Hong viewed her own hometown of Chongqing. "The further I am from home, the more homesick I feel. Even if the outside world is more splendid, my hometown is first," she said.

Hong said travel is a writer's inner journey. "By observing other people's

lives and communicating with them, you can examine and communicate with yourself," she said.

Camilla Baresani, 49, whose newest novel *Un'Estate Fa* (Before Summer) won this year's Italian Hemingway Literature Prize and Rapallo Literature Prize, said cross-country travel helps writers understand another country's history and local people's character, and that travel literature can enhance communication among different culture and nations.

Baresani said the visit helped her gain inspiration and materials for her next creation: a novel drawing on her experiences in China. "Although Italian media focuses on China's development, Chinese literature or Italian literature related to China has had little influence in Italy," she said. "But I think I have an obligation to convey my views about China to my readers."

Baresani encouraged students at the event to venture into the outside world, saying, "The more you experience, the more you will be able to understand."

Riffing on the spirit of change

By He Jianwei

Although known as one of the best contemporary novelists in Chinese literature, only two collections of essays by Taiwanese writer Zhang Dachun have been published on the Chinese mainland.

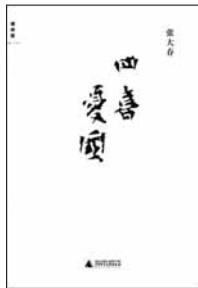
This month, Guangxi Normal University Press released a collection of his short stories, *Sixi Youguo* (Lucky Worries About His Country), including 13 short stories first published in the 1980s.

"Sixi Youguo" was the title of one of his short stories published in 1987. This best representation of his black humor was why *Asia Week* selected Zhang as one of the 100 best Chinese novelists of the 20th century.

The story began as an accident.

When visiting one of his poorest friends, he found the man was using old newspaper to wallpaper his house. On closer inspection, Zhang spotted one of Chiang Kai-shek's proclamations on the pages.

In the story, the protagonist Lucky Zhu is a retired Kuomintang soldier living a poor life. As an illiterate but patriotic man, he lived in memories of the past.



Sixi Youguo (Lucky Worries About His Country)

By Zhang Dachun, 348pp, Guangxi Normal University Press, 29.80 yuan

What few characters he can recognize he learned from a newspaper of Chiang Kai-shek's proclamations.

Every year, Chiang Kai-shek delivers a proclamation to warn people to be vigilant against Communist infiltration and

to prepare to retake the mainland. These soon ended after Chiang's death in 1975.

But the Kuomintang continued to rule Taiwan under martial law until the late 1980s. It finally ended when Chiang Ching-kuo came to power, lifting the decree of martial law in 1987.

Zhang's novel depicts social life around this period.

"Society was chaotic – it was the beginning of the rise of Taiwan's economy and the first days of democracy. Every sort of idea was floating around," Zhang said.

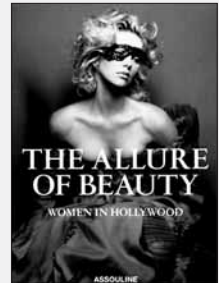
Before 1980, Taiwan had a strong literary tradition of toeing the line. But when magical realism was prevailing, Zhang wrote his story "The General's Monument," in which an old general caught up in his past glory parades his imaginary platoon down the street.

Zhang always ties together history and fiction in his stories, many of which are a brutal satire of Taiwan's populace at an unstable time.

The short stories selected for this collection all provide a window into this time of change.

Trends Lounge book listing

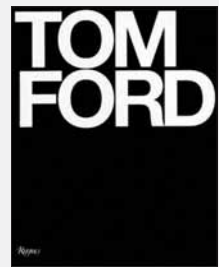
Located at The Place, Trends Lounge is a bookstore and cafe with a wide selection of international art, design and architecture books.



The Allure of Beauty: Women in Hollywood

By Karen Durbin, 130pp, Assouline, 464 yuan

The book presents Hollywood's legendary actresses from the 1930s to the present, including Marilyn Monroe, Marlene Dietrich, Anita Ekberg and Julia Roberts. Each page of this vibrant anthology radiates with provocative images of unforgettable faces and moments that have forever changed the place of women in Hollywood as well as in our social culture.



Tom Ford

By Tom Ford and Bridget Foley, 416pp, Rizzoli, 1,105 yuan

This book is a complete catalogue of Ford's designs for Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent from 1994 to 2004. In the past decade, the fashion icon has transformed Gucci from a moribund accessories label into one of the sexiest brands. His designs increased sales at Gucci tenfold and have helped build the Gucci brand into the luxury goods conglomerate that it is today.



Beijing: The New City

By Claudio Greco and Carlo Santoro, 272pp, Skira, 264 yuan

Over the past 15 years, Beijing has experienced unprecedented change. Contemporary skyscrapers and architectural forms are gradually encroaching on the historic city center. Steel and glass structures, constructions reminiscent of distant metropolises, highways, viaducts and sports facilities, have given Beijing a new face.

(By He Jianwei)

Get ready for the Windows phone

User interface

The Windows Phone looks simple when compared to its flashy Apple cousin. However, the touch functionality now expected of smart phones is present and with a snappy response time. Based on test videos posted online, there appears to be no noticeable delay when sliding a finger over the screen.

The OS contains a home screen, with tiles similar to most other mobile phones, which lists information, updates and favorite applications; an application list, which lists every application in a dense menu; and a hub page.

While many functions require long presses instead of light taps to activate, the interface remains very intuitive.

Joshua Topolsky of Engadget compared the long press to an OS skeleton key. "You just have to try it and see what kind of functionality it unlocks. Once you get into the habit of holding down on items instead of wildly searching for the next screen or tile, it makes a lot of sense, but it does take some getting used to," he said.

Subtle animations show up when something is loading or syncing – usually this is indicated by a series of tiny dots in the upper section of the screen. This design lets the user to know whether the phone is thinking or working.

For the most part, the UI gets out of the way and lets the user focus on content.

However, like early iPhones, Windows Phone 7 lacks the ability to copy and paste text. It also lacks multitasking, which is sad when even iOS has overcome this hurdle. Hopefully these shortcomings are fixed in future revisions.

Typing and Office

One of the reasons many people avoid buying a touch-screen phone is because of the virtual keyboard.

Many users of BlackBerry phones and the Nokia E series laugh at the inconvenient virtual keyboard used by the iPhone. Without physical touch feedback, typing mistakes are the rule rather than the norm, and this makes writing emails on a mobile phone troublesome.

But test reports say this does not happen on Windows Phone 7. Topolsky said in his test report that the keyboard was far superior to the one found on Android phones.

The keyboard is drawn on screen as several rows of white-on-black or black-on-white keys depending on the color of the application. When typing, each letter pops up when struck. Function keys such as shift, return, number and punctuation keys are available. If the user holds down a key it displays additional options for accents.

Text messaging is another important mobile phone feature. Like iOS, Windows Phone 7 shows speech balloons that mimic the MSN experience. The interface is very simple and reminiscent of pixel art. MMS messages can be displayed inline like a chat window and saved to the phone. Pressing and holding each message allows you to delete or forward it.

The mobile Office implementation lacks PowerPoint support, but few people would be eager to design a PowerPoint presentation using such a small screen.

Internet application

In an era when even

10-year-olds send an email a day, mobile phones play a crucial role as portable Internet terminals.

On Windows Phone 7, users can configure the phone's email client to send mail through their Windows Live IDs or other accounts such as Yahoo! and Gmail. The phone automatically syncs any contacts and calendars it finds on these accounts.

The bigger surprise was the browser. While Internet Explorer on the desktop is regularly shamed by Chrome, Firefox and Opera, it works quite well on the mobile system. Pages slide quickly, zooming is smooth and everything renders without blanking. The level of detail is similar to what you can see on Google Maps.

The browser's features are minimal, but it does have a "pin to start" option that lets you turn a page into a home screen tile, complete with a miniaturized view of the site. But without Flash and Silverlight support, online videos

are off limits. This means no YouTube.

Of course, the lack of YouTube is hardly a deal breaker in the China market, where the website has been blocked for several years.

Camera, music, store

Camera functions still depend on the hardware, but the system takes over after pressing the shutter button. Users can easily upload the photos directly to Windows Live SkyDrive or Facebook, and there is built-in software designed to arrange, send or modify photos.

Microsoft's Zune music player has also been transplanted onto the mobile system. But chips and earphones play a bigger role in determining the quality of sound than the OS. Zune works similar to iTunes on the iPhone, allowing users to connect to an online store to buy music and applications.

Xbox Live is integrated, and there is an Xbox category in the Marketplace. However, its current offerings are few.

Samsung Focus

It is the thinnest Windows phone and is actually the WP7 version of the Galaxy S with its 4-inch WVGA Super AMOLED screen.



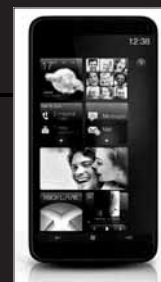
The first wave of phones

Android saved Motorola with its release, and HTC, Dell and several Korean brands are hoping Microsoft's new mobile operating system will do the same for their handsets.



Dell Venue Pro

This phone features a 4.1-inch WVGA AMOLED multi-touch screen. But the most attractive design part is the full physical QWERTY keyboard that can be drawn out from the bottom.



HTC HD7

As an upgrade of the HD2, this new phone features a 4.3-inch TFT multi-touch screen and a 1 GHz Qualcomm MSM8250 CPU. A 5.0 Megapixel camera with an LED flash is also available.



LG Optimus 7

This phone features 16GB of internal storage and a 3.8-inch LCD touch screen. LG's user interface used to be very inconvenient – the new system may fix this problem.



Retro is the new vogue



Incentive regenerating cream, 1080 yuan

By Liang Meilan

Vintage is the rage these days, and that's especially true in China, where time-honored brands hold a special place in consumers' heart. Old brands are also being given new twists, making them increasingly compatible with a modern society that's proud of its history.

The phenomenon is most obvious in Shanghai. When Time-Honored Chinese Brand Shopping Mall opened in May, it attracted many urban hipsters with its wide range of traditional brands, many of which have been around for more than 100 years.

In this issue, *Beijing Today* will introduce two legendary Shanghai brands that herald the trend. Their products are stylish and practical, and expats who wear them will instantly gain street cred.



Radiance restoration cream, 680 yuan



Orlando Bloom with Warrior shoes

High-end cosmetics

Shanghai Jahwa, the country's biggest cosmetics manufacturer, recently relaunched its brand Shuangmei (two sisters) under a new name: Shanghai Vive. With products that have unique cultural value and aristocratic beauty, the brand is hoping to tap into the lucrative market of the female nouveau riche.

The brand started out in 1898 as a luxury for well-heeled upper-class aristocrats who could afford its secret and expensive ingredients. In the early 20th century, the Shuangmei boutique became a landmark in the city's most high-end commercial area on Nanjing Lu. It outshined international brands and became a symbol of affluence.

Creator Feng Futian, also the founder of Kwong Sang (predecessor to the Jahwa Group), embedded a culture into his brand by choosing the name Shuangmei, which represents two outstanding traits of Shanghai beauties.

He said that a perfect Shanghai aristocratic beauty can be defined by two words. One is *dia*, which, in the Shanghai dialect, is used to describe women with tender, delicate appearances and behaviors and genuine feminine charms; and the other one is *jia*, which describes smart women who are sharp decision-makers.

The current logo of two women in qipao recalls the image of Shanghai circa 1930, when the city was known as the Paris of the East.

This logo was designed by DEM, a design and branding company in Taipei, Taiwan Province, which is also in charge of the package design,

branding and marketing for Shanghai Vive. Interestingly enough, the DEM team is led by Chiang Yubou, great-grandson of Chiang Kai-shek, the wartime leader of China who was defeated by the Communists and fled to Taiwan in 1949.

The glass packages used for the first line of products are predominately red, and are considered by some to be collector's pieces. Elements of 1930s fashion are apparent, like the perfume bottle whose bottleneck resembles a pinned up bun — a popular hairstyle for women of that time.

"Apart from evoking the seductive curves of the female form, the cap was designed to resemble an elegant hairpin," Chiang said. A black sprayer was designed as an ancient hand pump with a long thin pipe and a Chinese knot-like head.

The Vive product list is mainly a replica of the Shuangmei list, but the products have been modernized. The line includes five items meant to compete directly with luxury cosmetic brands such as Lancome and Dior: facial cleaner (290 yuan), radiance restoration cream (680 yuan), incentive regenerating cream (1080 yuan), eau de parfum (890 yuan) and a soap (220 yuan).

A recommended product is the radiance restoration cream, a gold-prize winner in the 1915 Panama World Expo. The improved version keeps the century-old formulation, featuring a mixed natural essence taken from tuckahoe (a wild plant with whitening and anti-aging elements), rose and pearl.



Old advertisement



Eau de parfum, 890 yuan



Soap, 220 yuan

Shanghai Vive

Where: Art Deco Pease Hotel, 20 Nanjing Dong Lu, Huangpu District, Shanghai

Open: 9 am – 10 pm

Tel: (021) 3366 3536

Website: shanghaiave.com.cn

Warrior does fashion

Fashion watchers should know about a sportswear brand called Warrior (Huili in Chinese), since Orlando Bloom wore a pair of Feiyues (one of Warrior's shoes) when filming *New York, I Love You* in 2009.

The 460-yuan white rubber-soled canvas shoes were thereafter beloved by many, making it a made-in-China fashion miracle. Another example of an unforeseen success: LV's red-and-white striped woven bags, modeled after the ones used by Chinese migrant workers.

The sneakers are recognized as "kung fu shoes" in the West, and make for comfortable casual wear. Warrior's shoes are mostly canvas shoes with a black or white base and simple red or blue stripes.

Warrior is actually an 83-year-old Shanghai brand that more or less vanished with the emergence of foreign brands like Nike and adidas. But three years ago, a revolutionary branding and marketing strategy took advantage of the vintage trend in China and gave the shoe new life.

More than 200 stores throughout the country now supply Warrior shoes for ballet, volleyball, basketball, running and soccer, priced between 19 to 200 yuan.

Patrice Bastian, from France, brought the brand to Europe in 2005 and paved the way for its global expansion. Warrior stores can be found in Europe, the US and Malaysia, where they are priced at 250 to 500 yuan.

Recently, Shanghai saw the opening of a flagship store near the original factory in Yangpu District. The store offers more than 2,000 styles, including specially designed shoes that commemorates the Expo.



Chen Ronghui/CFP

Warrior Beijing

Where: Lisheng Sports Mall, 201 Wangfujing Da Jie, Dongcheng District

Tel: 6525 0870

Website: warriorshoes.com



Photos provided by Shanghai Vive

Meet the Greeks



Agioritikos Rose Wine

Year: 2008

Character: very smooth with orange and peach flavor, best to match with barbeque and Chinese food

Best temperature for drinking: 8-10 C

Price: 204 yuan



Traminer White Dry Wine

Year: 2009

Character: agreeable with the flavor of albicocca and rose

Best temperature for drinking: 8-10 C

Price: 218 yuan

Where to buy

Jenny Lou's Sanlitun branch

Where: 6 Sanlitun Bei Xiaojie, Chaoyang District

Open: 8 am - 10 pm

Tel: 6461 6928

Jenny Lou's Chaoyang Park branch

Where: 1-16, Chaoyanggongyuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 8 am - 10 pm

Tel: 6501 6249

By Wang Yu

Most people, when they think of Greece, think about the country's contribution to the history of art, drama, politics and science. They will often overlook another important aspect of the country - its food.

To introduce flavors from the Aegean Sea, a festival called "Meet the Greeks," launched last Saturday at Jenny Lou's, will last until the end of the month.

"The festival aims to promote in the Chinese market Greek Feta cheese and yellow cheese, yoghurt, wine, olive oil, mineral water, juices, snacks and spirits such as tsipouro and ouzo," says Aris Argiriou, head of the Beijing branch of Kondor SA, one of Greece's biggest food and drink distributors.

Among the products already imported, Greek wine is proving to be a highlight. Wine has been produced in Greece since

500 BC, when people learned to plant olives and grapes, making the country a cradle in the European wine scene.

Greece ranks in the Top 10 in the world for total consumption of wine. However, for whatever reason, Greek wine never gained a global reputation on par with French, Italian or Spanish wine.

"Greece has great wine, but people in our country tend to keep the wine for themselves rather than export it to other countries," says Laowan, owner of the Greek restaurant Argo at Wudaoying Hutong. "There used to be few manufacturers who focused on the foreign market. Now the situation has changed a bit."

Cooperating with local company Daysun Express, products from four main Greek wine man-

ufacturers have been introduced to Beijing. Among them is Achaia Clauss, one of the oldest brands in Greece, founded in 1861. The brand is best known for its fortified red wine, Mavrodaphne, which is produced from a black grape of the same name that is indigenous to the Achaia region in Northern Peloponnese.

Then there is Protapapas, a brand founded in 1985 by chemical engineer A. Protapapas.

The privately owned Protapapas vineyard is located in the Macedonian region of Kavala, 250 meters above sea level on the foothills of Pigeon Mountain and four kilometers from the Aegean Sea. The mild climate fosters a great taste. Products of Protapapas, especially the aged bottles, are stored in underground caves.

Greek brandy

is also on the import list. The Ouzo of Kardasi company produces a flavor unique to Greece. The anise-flavored aperitif is widely consumed in Greece and Cyprus, where people like to drink it before consuming their entrees. The drink is somewhat similar to anise-flavored liqueurs, like Sambuca from Italy or Patxaran from Spain.

Comparatively, Ouzo is stronger. When water or ice is added, the ouzo, normally clear in color, turns milky white. This is because anethole, the essential oil of anise, is soluble in alcohol but not in water. Diluting the spirit causes it to separate, creating an emulsion whose fine droplets scatter the light. The flavor of the wine is better when mixed with ice.

Peter Zhu, CEO of Daysun Express, says that soon consumers will be able to find such Greek food items at ordinary supermarkets such as Carrefour.

Photos provided by Daysun Express

Agioritikos Red Dry Wine

Year: 2006

Character: pure red with strong blackberry and violet taste, best to match with Greek cheese

Best temperature for drinking: 16-18 C

Price: 237 yuan



Agioritikos White Dry Wine

Year: 2009

Character: jasmine flower flavor and nut after taste, suggested to match with seafood

Best temperature for drinking: 8-10 C

Price: 198 yuan



Thassinos Red Dry Wine

Year: 2004

Character: pure red, high acid with strawberry aftertaste

Best temperature for drinking: 14-16 C

Price: 207 yuan

Special Halloween cupcakes ready for order

By Liang Meilan

Cupcake lovers probably already know about Lollipop, a British cupcake brand in Beijing. In preparation for Halloween and to commemorate the brand's first anniversary, owner Alexandra Morris is designing a special series of Halloween-themed cupcakes that can be ordered at lollipopbakery.cn until the end of this weekend.

The first item is a spiced pumpkin cupcake (220 yuan for a dozen) made with cinnamon and nutmeg. It's a seasonal item that can warm the body to fight off the autumn chill.

Two mix boxes are also available: the classic box (chocolate, vanilla and red velvet) and gourmet box (three of any flavor). Morris is thinking about adding a Beijing box featuring red bean and sesame cupcakes.

Morris is currently undergoing a bold experiment to make hot Sichuan-flavored cupcakes with chocolate and red pepper powder. She has yet to add this to her menu, though her friends have tried it and enjoy it.

"If customers want to have a try, I would be happy to provide," she said.

Another offering is the Halloween box (340 yuan), which includes spiced pumpkin cupcakes, mummy cupcakes and cemetery cupcakes (four of each). Oreo cookie shavings are used as grave sites, and little sugary crosses and pumpkins are part of the decoration.

Those who want to order should do so online 24 hours in advance, in English or Chinese.

Lollipop sells cupcakes at Fisheye Cafe and Crepanini in Sanlitun, and at Streets from Africa in Shunyi District. People can now also find chocolate, vanilla and red velvet Lollipop cupcakes at Hilton Beijing Hotel near Sanyuanqiao.

Lollipop Bakery

Alexandra Morris 13552772683



Photos provided by Alexandra Morris



"The key parts of a cupcake are its soft, fluffy base, and of course the heaps of wonderfully sugary frosting piled on top."

For me, a cupcake with a cup of tea is the perfect respite from a hectic Beijing day!"

- Alexandra Morris



The Buzzcocks finally land in Beijing

By Wang Yu

The influential British punk band Buzzcocks was supposed to play at Modern Sky Festival last year but canceled just two weeks prior to the festival. Tonight, it makes its belated appearance in Beijing when it takes the stage at Yugongyishan.

The band was formed in Bolton, England in 1976, by guitarist Pete Shelley. After reading an NME review of the Sex Pistols' first performance, Shelley and lead singer Howard Devoto went to London to see the Sex Pistols live. They were duly impressed, and arranged for the Sex Pistols to perform at the Lesser Free Trade Hall in Manchester.

Eventually, Shelley and Devoto, joined by bassist Steve Diggle and drummer John Maher, were opening for the band they admired, at the Sex Pistols' second Manchester concert.

The band's name comes from Devoto and Shelley, who saw a headline for a review of the TV series *Rock Follies* in *Time Out* magazine that read, "It's the buzz, cocks!" ("Cock" is Manchester slang for "buddy.") The band thought the phrase captured the excitement of the

Sex Pistols and the nascent punk scene.

Over the past 34 years, Shelley has been the mainstay while other musicians have come and gone. The music has also persisted. The Buzzcocks is now regarded as an important influence on the Manchester music scene, the independent record label movement, punk rock, power pop, pop punk and indie rock. The band's music fuses pop craftsmanship with rapid-fire punk energy and has achieved great commercial success.

The band's record *Singles Going Steady* is known as a punk masterpiece. Its best-known single is "Ever Fallen in Love," which has been

widely covered by other bands and musicians.

"I can still remember the first time I listened to their music when I was in college," says Huang Shan, bassist of this reporter's band, Ele-nore. "It was a smuggled CD bought from the gray market. These classic bands are vivid in the memories of 25-year-old Chinese people."

They were the bands we saw on TV in the very beginning that we never thought we'd see live."

"The Buzzcocks is a real 'old' band because of its contribution to rock 'n' roll history," says music critic Charlotte Lan. "But the music never grows old and the band members' energy is still always a force on stage. People around the world still can sing their classic tracks, and now it's our turn in Beijing."

The Buzzcocks China Tour

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2, Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: October 22, 9:30 pm
Admission: 200 yuan
Tel: 6404 2711



5 Friday, October 22

Exhibition Blue Room – Yang Shaobin Solo Exhibition

Two opposing walls are covered with 38 of Yang's portraits. On one side are pictures of political leaders engaged in global climate talks; on the other, portraits of refugees living on the margins and struggling with the effects of climate change.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 12, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, free on Thursday
Tel: 8459 9269

Movie Memories of Tomorrow (2007)

Middle-aged Saeki leads a

perfect life: he is an executive at an advertisement company, he has a happy family and his daughter will marry soon. But one day, he is diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's, and everything changes.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 7 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 8229 6153

Nightlife Maximilian Hecker

Known for his airy pop music, this German musician released his latest album, *I Am Nothing But Emotion, No Human Being, No Son, Never Again Son*, in May.

Where: Mako Livehouse, 36 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8 pm
Admission: 120 yuan
advance purchase, 160 yuan at the door, 100 yuan for students
Tel: 5205 1112

6 Saturday, October 23

Exhibition Xu Cheng's Solo Exhibition

This exhibition presents Xu's paintings over the past two years, showing the artist's contemplative nature and pleasure in daily life.

Where: Gaodi Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until November 17, daily except Monday, 10:30 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6437 7177

Movie Stranger Than Fiction (2006)

Harold Crick's life has been crafted by author Karen Eiffel. When Crick hears the author in his head reveal that he is going to

die, he tries to find Eiffel to convince her to change the story's ending.

Where: Lady Book Salon, 69 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District
When: 7:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6270 1928

Nightlife

Wu & The Side Effect

Guitarist and songwriter Wu Kejia teams up with bassist Checo Fernandez and drummer Mo Mang to perform psychedelic and acid rock.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 30 yuan
advance purchase, 40 yuan at the door
Tel: 6401 4611

7 Sunday, October 24

Movie A Japanese Village – Furuyashikimura (1982)

This is the first film Shinsuke Ogawa made in the 1980s. Villagers in Furuyashikimura started cultivation in the middle of the Meiji Era and made a good fortune. The village used to have 18 families but now only eight of them are left since all the young people have gone to big cities to make a living. Now the town is left with the old.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 4:30 pm
Admission: 15 yuan, free on Thursday
Tel: 8459 9269

Exhibition American Printmaking Now



This exhibition focuses on the development of American printmaking over the past 30 years. Ninety pieces from 50 artists from eight top printmaking workshops in the US are on display. This marks the first time that American contemporary printmaking has been presented in China.

Where: The National Art Museum of China, 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: Until November 11, daily, 9 am – 5 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 6400 6326

Nightlife

Jordan Thomas Mitchell

Based in Beijing, this American musician plays folk music

with his fingerstyle guitar.

Where: D-22, 242 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 30 yuan; 20 yuan for students
Tel: 6265 3177



Nightlife

Christina Jaccard

The first-prize winner at the 1986 Interpop Festival in Budapest, this Zurich singer is famous for her gospel and blues music.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: October 27, 9 pm
Admission: 30 yuan advance purchase, 40 yuan at the door
Tel: 6401 4611

Stage in November

Concert

Vladimir and Vovka Ashkenazy Piano Duet

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: November 12, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-800 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Joe Hisaishi and China NCPA Concert Hall Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: November 14-15, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-880 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Li Yundi Piano Recital

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: November 12, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 6551 8058

France's Les Arts Florissant

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: November 25, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-880 yuan
Tel: 6417 7845

Dance

Dance and Love of Devotion

Where: Theater Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: November 10-11, 7:30 pm

Admission: 60-160 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Contemporary Ballet Gala: Moving Rooms

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: November 19-20, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-580 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Gecko's The Overcoats

Where: Capital Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: November 5-7, 7:30 pm
Admission: 40-300 yuan
Tel: 6524 6789

Tuesdays With Morrie

Where: Oriental Pioneer Theater, 8-2 Dongdan Santiao Wangfujing, Dongcheng District

When: November 12-14, 7:30 pm

Admission: 50-120 yuan
Tel: 6275 8452

(By He Jianwei)

Keep your lips safe this winter

By Li Zhixin

Meng Jie, a 29-year-old saleswoman, recently found her lips becoming cracked.

At first it was a mild annoyance, but her lips became painfully inflamed after eating hot pot with her clients last month. Although she wore lip gloss and applied antibiotic ointment several times a day, the dryness and swelling only worsened.

Doctors quickly diagnosed her with cheilitis.

Cheilitis is a condition which causes the lips to become dry, scaly and cracked. Often they are sensitive, easily becoming red and swollen. The condition causes severe discomfort and may make it difficult to speak, eat and smile.

Xu Yongmei, the director of dermatology at Peking University People's Hospital, said dry fall and winter weather make the skin of the lips especially disease prone.

Unlike much of the body, the thin skin of the lips lacks sebaceous glands that would otherwise secrete protective oils to prevent cracking and peeling.

The condition most often affects people who frequently lick or bite their lips. The digestive enzymes in saliva rapidly break down what little protective barrier exists on the lips. "Other bad habits like picking at scabs and cracks can cause the lips to bleed and get re-infected," she said.

Xu said cheilitis varies from

person to person, but most who develop it do so during winter.

"Every time there is a sudden drop in temperature we see an increase in patients with this condition," she said. But the lips are also susceptible to sunburn, since they lack any melanin that can help shield the skin from UV rays.

Other common causes of chapped lips include vitamin deficiency — especially a deficiency of vitamins A, B, C and B2 — mouth breathing, illness, wind burn, skin disorders, ill-fitting dentures, dehydration and smoking.

Certain allergies and medical conditions can also cause chapped lips. Chemotherapeutic agents, D-penicillamine, isoniazid, phenothiazine and high doses of vitamin A cause chapped lips in some people. They can also be a symptom of diabetes, Kawasaki disease, Sjogren's syndrome, macrocytosis and HIV/AIDS.

Xu said young people especially should avoid matte lipsticks, which can be extremely drying. "Use hydrating lipsticks with ingredients like beeswax, shea butter, vitamin E and almond, jojoba, coconut oils or glycerin, or add a layer of moisturizing lip balm underneath your lipstick," she said.

Eating more fruits and vegetables and sleeping regularly throughout the winter are other easy ways to keep your lips looking and feeling their best, she said.



CFP Photo

Fasting after diarrhea a dangerous folk remedy

By Li Zhixin

Tang Ying, 33, began having diarrhea last Monday. Believing an old wives' tale about fasting after diarrhea, she refused to eat for the next two days.

Folk wisdom again proved wrong when Tang ended up hospitalized and severely dehydrated.

Diarrhea is often caused by bacterial and viral infections, food allergies, certain medications and other intestinal disorders. The loose stools cause a rapid loss in fluids and salts, which can cause severe dehydration and shock due to thinning blood.

Li Hengshuang, a proctologist at Chaoyang Hospi-

tal, said fasting robs the body of energy, forcing it to pilfer reserves from blood and fat.

"When blood glucose concentrations fall below three millimoles per liter, you suffer a series of hypoglycemic reactions such as sweating, palpitations, fatigue, dizziness and ringing in the ears. In elderly people this can prove fatal," he said.

Sometimes people's long bouts of diarrhea can be due to lingering stomach flu or continuing irritable bowel syndrome. Li said when frequent bowel movements continue for more than a couple of days and there is no indication of parasitic or bacterial infection, certain foods can

relieve diarrhea and even put an end to the condition.

"Foods high in fat, rich in fiber or dairy may exacerbate diarrhea; low-fiber foods like bananas, rice, applesauce, toast, eggs or egg whites, instant rice noodles and chicken and yogurt can help alleviate symptoms and support recovery," he said.

Bananas have high potassium and a healthy balance of starch and fruit sugars that can help firm bowel movements. Rice and white or wheat toast should be served without added spices or butter since fats and spices may prolong frequent or watery bowel movements. Applesauce or even whole apples are a great

source of pectin, a natural bulking agent.

Yogurt can also help restore intestinal flora. After one or two days of diarrhea, the body is usually depleted of good bacteria, which can prolong the number of days of loose stools. By replacing these bacteria with the live cultures in yogurt, you can restore the balance more quickly. Yogurt also provides a much greater supply of protein than other foods.

If you opt for chicken, choose skinless white meat, since dark meat and skin contain added fat and flavor.

Because diarrhea drains the body of essential fluids, replenishing fluids is a pri-

mary goal of treatment. Li suggested clear fluids, such as broth, water and juices during and immediately following bouts of diarrhea for rehydration. If you feel up to eating solid foods, soups containing vegetables or chicken can add helpful nutrients and protein, which support lean tissue repair and energy.

Green tea or weak black tea and clear juice varieties, including apple juice, white grape juice and light cranberry juice, can also help to replace lost fluids. "But you should avoid common sports drinks since their high sugar content can result in more diarrhea," he said.

Catch autumn on wheels



By Zhang Dongya

"If one considers scenic spots pearls," said Zhao Yanyong, deputy director of the Outdoor Sports Club in Yanqing County, "then cycling can be the string that connects them."

Last month, the Yanqing County Tourism Bureau and Outdoor Sports Club issued eight cycling itineraries in Yanqing that go through scenic spots such as Longqing Canyon, Yudu Mountain, Yeya Lake and Badaling Great Wall.

With leaves turning red and the weather cooling down, autumn is the perfect time for cycling. Here's what you need to know to get started.



The route that takes bikes along Gui River, with park, lake and forest all around, is the most enjoyable.



Couples are often seen on tandem bikes talking and laughing along the road.



Bikers riding among poplar trees can feel the falling leaves.

Photos by Yin Yafei

Rent a bike and get going

Yanqing County, located in northwest Beijing, has been the top destination for cyclists and outdoor aficionados for years. It is surrounded by mountains and water, and is considered a great place to find good scenery and good people.

Tapping into its natural resources, the local tourism bureau in Yanqing recently developed eight cycling itineraries that cover 14 towns around the county.

The shortest route is a 7-kilometer ride from Waipao Village in the north to Shixia Village in the south. It's a relatively easy ride, with just a short jaunt through a mountainous path, and takes about an hour to complete.

On the way, bikers can stop at Lipao Ranch to pick apples and vegetables in the greenhouses. Apple-picking will be available until early November.

There are about 30 places that rent and repair bikes. More than 2,000 bikes are available, with various types including mountain bikes, tandem bikes and children's bikes.

Popular Gui River itinerary

The route following Gui River is the longest at 70 kilometers. There are several natural scenic spots along it, including Xiadu Park, Guihe Park, Binhe Forest Park and Yeya Lake, making this the most enjoyable tour.

Cyclists who rent bikes are required to return them at the same spot, but the circular route of Gui River saves energy and time. As this is the longest route, it is divided into two sections, an east and a west.

The river is relatively clean, with flora thriving along both banks. Few motor vehicles pass through the area, so the environment is serene and unpolluted.

Couples are often seen on tandem bikes talking and laughing along the road.

On the south bank of the river is a tranquil section with poplar forests and cornfields. Vines of morning glories spiraling up tree trunks are still in bloom. Some people stop to pick flowers to wear in their hair.

The cornfields these days are mostly bare, with only withered stalks remaining. Piles of corn, however, can still be found scattered around, the perfect image of countryside harvesting in autumn. Peasants can be seen working hard in the field. They go over the stalks, trying to find missing maize cobs, then pile them together and wait for tricycles to take them away.

Continued on page 21...



...continued from page 20

Those who want to get off the main road can turn onto a small dirt road that leads to Guihe Park. Inside are large areas of wetlands that are still green, giving visitors the impression that they're riding in springtime. The slopes here are gentle, so the ride is comfortable.

This is a great place for picnics and lounging. Bring a blanket if you don't want to get your pants dirty. Magpies and other birds chirp all about. The reeds in the nearby pond are beginning to yellow.

Riding along a park trail, one will come upon a broad lake that a Gui River tribu-

tary feeds into. The edges of a mountain's shadow touch the lake, with weeping willows on the shore, making the place look like a landscape painting. Fishermen can be seen on the banks as well.

The roads around this part are covered with leaves – the seasons changing, after all. But don't worry, staff from

the tourism bureau constantly check the roads to make sure the leaves don't conceal nasty potholes or other dangers.

Next to the forest is a poultry farm. Be careful, as bikers are liable to run into free-roaming chickens.

Deep in the forest, smoke trees are beginning to change colors. Alongside the gray

trunks of poplars, some leaves are yellow, others are red. The entire forest looks like an impressionist painting.

Locals can be seen picking mushrooms in the forest, which they say are a delicacy. Visitors who are queasy about picking wild fungi can proceed to Xibaimiao Ranch instead to pick apples.



Gui River is relatively clean, with trees thriving along both banks.

CFP Photo



Pond reeds are beginning to yellow.

Photos by Yin Yafei

Travel information

Getting there: Take bus 919 at Deshengmen or tourist special line S2 from Beijing North Railway Station to Yanqing County. Or drive along the Beijing-Tibet Expressway and get off at exit 62.

Bicycle rental

There are about 30 rental spots with more than 2,000 bikes. The nearest rental site is 15 minutes from the Yanqing County bus stop.

Open: 8 am – 5:30 pm.

Cost per bike: 5 yuan per hour, 30 yuan per day and 50 yuan for two days; insurance included. You must present your official identification (passports for foreigners) and pay a 500 yuan deposit for each bike.

Currently, visitors must return their bikes at the rental station where they got their bikes. Tour guides are offered free of charge at the rental sites.

Accommodation: Guihe is close to Yanqing County. Locals provide catering services and lodging. It costs 20 yuan per person on average for dinner and 30 yuan per night for lodging. Hotels in Yanqing County charge 200 for a standard room.



Riding in Yanqing County, bikers can go fruit-picking in locals' ranches.

CFP Photo



Dining

Hairy crab 2010 at Grand Millennium

Good news for those with exquisite tastes: the much sought-after hairy crabs from Lake Yang Cheng have arrived. Steam the crabs to enjoy their original flavor or have their roe and meat prepared in five recipes by Master Chef Chung. A top-quality male hairy crab costs 186 yuan; the steamed Yang Cheng female costs 166 yuan. Each customer will receive free ginger tea and rice dumplings.

Where: Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: From November
Cost: 15 percent gratuity
Tel: 8587 6888 ext. 3013



Award-winning Fizztastic brunch at Hilton

Fizztastic, now entering its second year as an award-winning Sunday Brunch, is teaming up with professionals to add a new children's program to its popular play area. The new "Kids Paradise" has a children's buffet centering on cartoon movies and playful knickknacks.

Be mesmerized by the skills of Fizztastic's tea master and enjoy the sounds of house jazz band Penta at the Hilton Beijing Wangfujing's "Fizztastic" Champagne Brunch.

Where: Vasco's, Penta, 5F Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, 8 Wangfujing Dong Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Sundays, 11:30 am - 3 pm
Cost: 388 yuan, 129 yuan for children 6 to 12; younger than 6 eat free (15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 5812 8888 ext. 8411



Aviation

SilkAir inducted into hall of fame

SilkAir, the regional wing of Singapore Airlines, has been inducted into TTG Asia's Travel Awards Hall of Fame at the 21st Travel Awards 2010.

TTG Asia's Travel Hall of Fame honors those organizations that have won the TTG Travel Awards at least 10 times. SilkAir's induction into the Hall of Fame follows its

10th successive win in the TTG Travel Awards. The airline has been voted Best Regional Airline in the annual Travel Awards for the last 10 years.

"SilkAir is honored to be inducted into the Travel Awards Hall of Fame, joining our parent company, Singapore Airlines, which was inducted in 2002. This

award would not have been possible without the support of our loyal customers and industry partners, to whom we are very grateful. They have our assurance that we will continue to strive to exceed their expectations," SilkAir Chief Executive Chin Yau Seng said, commenting on the induction.

Comfortable seats come to Air France

Air France will be introducing new comfortable business seats for working, resting or enjoying in-flight time. Twenty aircraft will be refitted with the new seats by summer 2011.

Over the past few months, Air France has been expanding its catering services in business class to offer customers more choices. It is also adding to its range of in-flight and lounge services.



Hotel



Thanksgiving Day

Come and share in a feast at Valley Cafe to celebrate Turkey Day. Roast turkey and honey-clove pork legs with all the trimmings will be served family style with a dessert buffet. Dinner with jazz accompaniment starts at 6 pm.

Where: Zhongguancun Crown Plaza Hotel, 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District
Tel: 5993 8888

Bring out the devil in you

Come for a red devil-themed dinner buffet at Valley Cafe. Start your feast with pan-fried salmon steaks with creamy dill sauce, a Chinese barbecue platter and roast beef fillets. Come on October 31 to take home a bit of the Halloween spirit with a pumpkin-shaped cake.

Where: Zhongguancun Crown Plaza Hotel, 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District
When: October 31
Tel: 5993 8888

Spa

Winter essentials at the Hilton spa

Immerse yourself in the renewing powers of nature at The Spa of Hilton Beijing Wangfujing.

Start with a soothing and sensual massage with essential oils and heated basalt stones to detoxify and relax your muscles. The session is sure to relieve muscle pain, increase metabolism and relax your tissues. Continue the pampering with a deep-cleansing facial treatment to render your skin fresh and compact.

Where: 6th floor of Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, 8 Wangfujing Dong Jie, Dongcheng District
When: Daily, 10 am - 11 pm
Cost: 780 yuan (15 percent gratuity)
Tel: 5812 8888 ext. 8560



Event

Olivier Roussel Duet

Yishu 8 Art & Culture Space is presenting its Music Beyond the Moongate Concert Series.

Olivier Roussel first met fellow musician Fred Pasqua in 1990. Years of travel and cultural experiences enriched their sound until the two reunited in 2008. In the new duo, Olivier Roussel provides the core compositions on which they base their musical dialogue of melody and cultural experience.

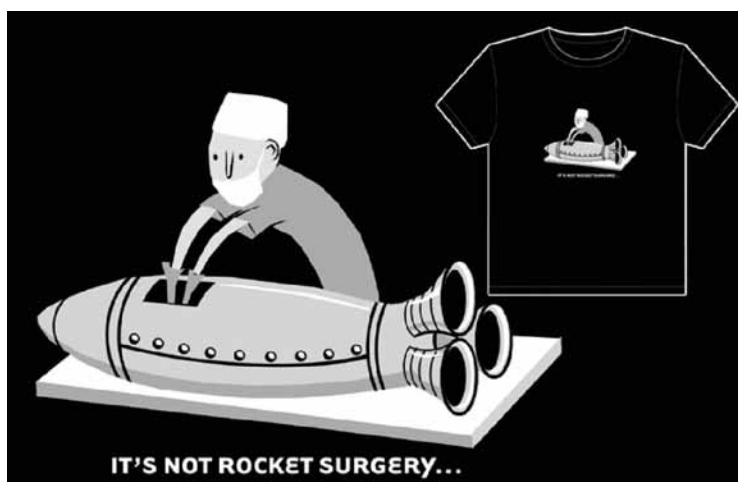
Where: 200 meters into Cable 8, 9 Liangjiayuan, Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District
When: October 23, 7:30 pm
Cost: 100 yuan
Tel: 6581 9058

(By Jackie Zhang)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Rocket surgery or rocket science?



By Zhang Dongya

My cousin, who works in the US, recently took her American husband Johnny to China for a two-month vacation. Johnny is a good conversationalist. With my many relatives, he talked happily about his family, his hobbies – such as skateboarding and cycling – and his best friend, a big Labrador named Aoyun (Olympics).

But when asked about his job, he was vague and only said it was related to rockets. People immediately became curious about this “unique” job, but Johnny remained tight-lipped about it. We guessed that the job was top secret, so we stopped inquiring.

One Sunday afternoon, I went with my brother, my cousin and Johnny out shopping. Johnny bought two shirts, but as he was buying my cousin a dress, his credit card stopped working because it

exceeded some sort of daily limit. He was confused and said he was unaware of such a spending limit. Then he called the credit card center.

It did not go well. After several phone calls, the problem remained unresolved. Johnny became impatient and irritable. He shouted into the phone as his wife tried to console him. My brother and I were waiting in the lounge when I heard Johnny shout angrily, “Come on! It’s not rocket surgery!” He must have thoroughly lost his temper, because people were now turning to look at him.

I was caught by the phrase “rocket surgery” and connected a couple dots: Johnny’s job must be maintaining and repairing rockets! I felt a small amount of joy because I thought “surgery” was a good metaphor.

I told my brother this and he said it

made some sense.

On the way home, I asked Johnny, “Is your job the maintenance and repair of rockets?”

“No. Why?” He was puzzled.

“Because I heard you say something like ‘rocket surgery’ on the phone just now.”

“Oh, no,” he smiled. “I said ‘rocket science,’ which means it is not that difficult or complicated. It doesn’t require intelligence or higher education like rocket science or brain surgery. It’s just a common card problem!”

“By the way, it has nothing to do with my job,” he added. “I think I started saying this long before I worked on rockets.”

And then, not without some bitterness, he said, “The card’s customer service guy is retarded. I’m going to make a complaint tomorrow.”

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you’re planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week

1. By the way of

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): This phrase is wrongly used with an erratic definite article. It does not have that definite article. It is fairly tricky, but you have to commit it to memory as that is the way English is spoken. “By way of” may mean “through” or “via”; for instance, I shall go by way of Hong Kong, or via Hong Kong. It also may mean “as”; for instance, He says something by way of apology. The mother combed the girl’s hair by way of affection. It may mean something like “with a view to,” expressing the purpose of the action. For example, He makes inquiries by way of learning the truth. It actually means: He makes inquiries with a view to learn the truth. You see that none of the expressions assume the definite article.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): I think this phrase has been confused with “by the way,” which is an interjection, used when you have just thought of something: By the way, did you remember to get milk at the store? By the way, I have a meeting Wednesday, could you come over Thursday instead?

2. Be aware and be aware of

ZS: I often find beginners to English confusing the usage of “be aware” and “be aware of.” Let me explain it to you. The phrase “be aware” is often followed by an object clause, such as, He is aware that she means to insult him in her speech. Are you aware that you are sitting on my hat? I was aware that the loosening of mortgage credit terms for subprime borrowers increased financial risk (Edward Gramlich). The phrase “be aware of” is often followed by a noun, like, We are fully aware of the gravity of the situation. I was not aware of how deeply he had felt the death of his mother. Are you aware of the danger in crossing the Gobi desert? He becomes aware of the danger arising from his expedition into no-man’s land.

TBZ: That is a tough one! Back to the hard work of studying the vocabulary and listening to the spoken English lessons! Are you aware that there are native English speakers who would like to be your friend? Are you aware of the possibility of having a real and fulfilling friendship with someone from another culture, perhaps also improving your English on the side?

3. He subjects to regulatory sanction.

ZS: The writer here is confused whether the function of “subject” should be as an adjective or as a transitive verb. When it is an adjective, it should read like this: He is subject to regulatory sanction, or, He subjects himself to regulatory sanction. We have here a number of examples to show “subject” as an adjective: The transportation is subject to the caprices of nature. The plan is subject to the approval of authorities. We are all subject to the law of nature and will age. We are subject to the law of the country where we live. It may also mean “vulnerable to.” For instance, He is subject to cold. Japan is subject to earthquakes. When it is used as a verb, it has to be a transitive verb: He subjects himself to the law of the country in which he lives. The Queen subjected the people to her rule. He subjects himself to ridicule with his stupid speech.

TBZ: Again, I always apologize to my students – English is hard! On the other hand, many people have learned to speak English well – you can too. If you are willing to subject yourself to a bit of hardship now, the subject of English will become easier for you, and those around you will be impressed with your talent and your gracious modesty and help for those coming behind you.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Beware of the online translator!



Photo by Fiona Buruma

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

That is what this sign is telling you. Put in the time, put in the effort. Memorize the vocabulary and do the grammar exercises, even if it makes you want to gouge your eyes out.

Fei often means “not” – but not always, so don’t hold me to it. *Ben* can mean “this; this one,” and *yiyuan* means “hospital.” The problem is that this sign was spotted in Chaoyang Park with nary a hospital in sight! However, *yuan* on its own means “court, courtyard.” In this case, probably some kind of open place that looks like it would be a

good place to park your car while you hop on the subway and go at the mall. The last two characters in the first line, *xiaofei*, really do mean “consumption.”

Put it all together and you have something like: “No parking place consuming.” Hmm. Loosely translated by me via the native-speaker, it means something like: “If you aren’t spending money, you can’t park here.” This is reiterated by the second line in Chinese, which says simply “No Parking.”

Ah! No wonder my QQ was towed away twice ... next time, I’ll take Bus 11.

Resident Evil: Afterlife

(2010)

Movie of the week

Few movies adapted from video games ever achieve both commercial success and critical acclaim. *Tomb Raider* was fairly well received, as was much of the *Resident Evil* series.

But *Afterlife*, the fourth installment in the series, is controversial.

While gamers love the new characters and special effects, movie fans have utterly hated it for its lack of anything resembling a plot. At best, it offers an excuse to eat popcorn.

The film stars Milla Jovovich – a superwomen staple of the Sci-Fi genre – and Wentworth Miller, who is one again seen breaking out of prison, this time surrounded by an army of the undead.

Synopsis

In a world ravaged by a virus that turns its victims into the undead, Alice continues her journey to find and lead survivors to safety. Her deadly battle with the Umbrella Corporation reaches new heights as Alice gets unexpected help from an old friend. A new lead promising a safe haven from the undead takes them to Los Angeles, where she and her comrades are about to step into a deadly trap.



Scene 1

(The intro)

Alice's voice-over: My name is Alice. I worked for the Umbrella Corporation in a secret laboratory developing an experimental bio weapon. There was an incident. A virus escaped. Everybody died. The trouble was ... they didn't stay dead. This was the start of an **apocalypse (1)** that would sweep the entire world.

The men who are responsible for this disaster **took refuge (2)** underground and continued to experiment with the deadly T-Virus. They felt secure in their high-tech fortress.

But they were wrong.

Scene 2

(Alice lands on an abandoned prison and finds survivors. She also finds Chris of STARS, who is still locked in a cell.)

Chris (C): My name's Chris. You're the one flying that plane.

Alice (A): How do you know that?

C: Wendell isn't only one who hears things. I am glad you made it. Maybe you can talk some sense into these people.

A: What do you mean?

C: Isn't it obvious? I'm not a prisoner. I shouldn't be in here. I was working with a military unit. We were using this place as a **staging post (3)**. Things were already pretty bad when the order came through from the governor. You see, we needed as many people on the streets as possible to fight those things, and it was chaos.

We were pulling out and a gang of prisoners **jumped (4)** me. I guess they thought I was guard. When I woke up, my unit was gone ... and I was in here. Their idea of joke.

A: You don't believe me?

A: If the others ...

C: You need to get me out of here.

A: We're all trapped here one way or another.

C: That's true but I can help you.

Scene 3

(Alice meets Wesker, former team leader of STARS.)

A: What do you want from me?

Wesker (W): The T-Virus brought me back. But it's so strong. It fights for full control. I thought that if I ingested fresh human DNA, I could redress the balance.

A: No wonder your crew abandoned ship.

W: No matter. Now I have a new subordinate and a new plan. You were the only one who successfully **bonded with (5)** the T-Virus. Your DNA is stronger than the others. If I ingest you ... I gain control.

A: That's pretty smart thinking. There is only one problem with that plan. I'm not on the menu.

Vocabulary

1. **apocalypse:** the end of the world; doom
2. **take refuge in:** to hide from
3. **staging post:** a stopover for military use
4. **jump:** here it means to attack
5. **bond with:** to fuse with or become one

(Wang Yu)